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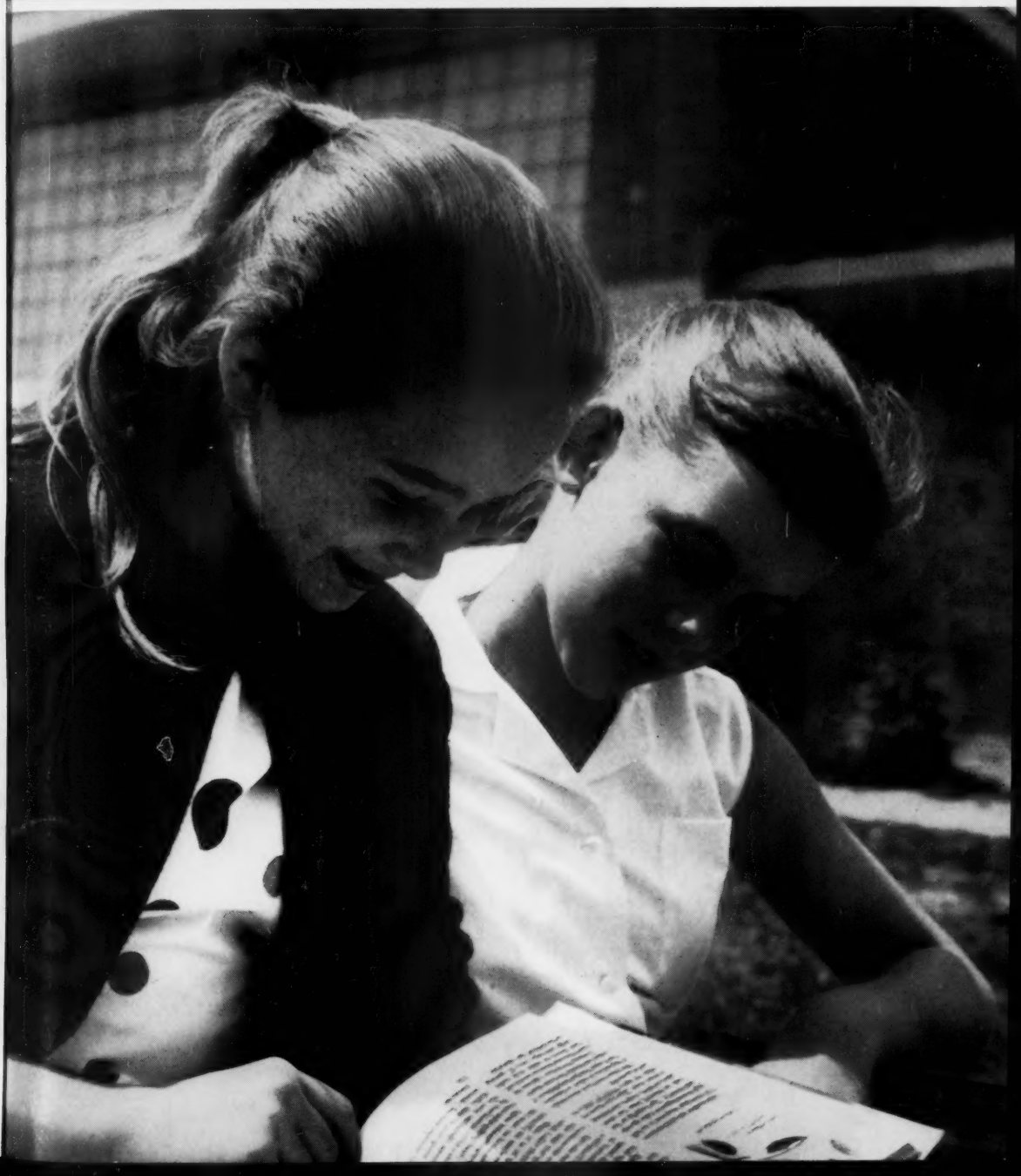
Organizing for Effective Learning



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Organizing for Effective Learning

Editorial

Organizing for Effective Learning — *Chester Babcock* — 402

Articles

Why Look at School Organization? — *Stuart E. Dean* — 406
Staff Utilization To Improve Learning — *Arthur J. Lewis* — 410
Space: How Organized, K-12 — *Douglas R. Jones* — 416
Time: How Utilized — *Jess R. Beard* — 420
Ways of Working with Learners — *Mildred Ellisor* — 425
Plant Planning Affects Use of Instructional Materials — *Pauline A. O'Melia* — 432

Departments

The Importance of People — *Fred T. Wilhelms* — 439
Curriculum News — *Paul R. Klohr, Alexander Frazier* — 447
Curriculum Research — *Walter B. Waetjen, Norman D. Bowers and Robert S. Soar* — 451
Curriculum Bulletins — *Arthur Hoppe* — 455
Letters to the Editor — *Rachel Bodoh and John Sternig* — 459
Significant Books — *Elizabeth Z. Howard, Marie Kupres* — 465

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Editorial

Chester Babcock

Organizing for Effective Learning

ORGANIZING the educational program for more effective learning is the great challenge facing America's educators in the decade ahead. The challenge is not an easy one. Meeting it requires, first of all, a willingness to break the shackles of tradition which to an unfortunate degree limit the development of more effective types of organization.

These limitations by tradition involve nearly all aspects of the school program: the length of the school day and school year, size of class, graduation requirements, groupings, class organization, school plant planning, building equipment, organization of staff and corps, and so on. You can add a dozen more of your own, and as you do, ask yourself the simple question, "Why?" Are these traditional patterns of organization based on sound research? Or have we too often accepted an organizational structure which has grown like Topsy and then attempted to establish a rationale to justify both its existence and its perpetuation?

Meeting the challenge of organizing for more effective learning requires, also, a more creative approach than many of us have commonly employed. These post-Sputnik years when the public schools have been made the scapegoat for our apparent lag in the probing of outer space are years of great opportunity for us: public attention is focused on the schools; the importance in the cold war of at least certain aspects of education is recognized—and perhaps exaggerated; there is an almost unprecedented willingness on the part of the public to accept experimentation and change in the schools, if those changes will improve the quality of education. In short, the prevailing climate of opinion is one in which creative thinking about educational tasks *should* be flourishing.

How have we thus far met this challenge to be creative in organizing our schools for more effective learning? Examining the changes that have been made, or at least recommended, one finds considerable evidence for a number of generalizations; perhaps they are over-generalizations.

There has been a strong tendency to retreat to the past rather than to push ahead on the frontier. It is easy to find an example. Many school systems have fallen back on systems of so-called ability grouping that were tried, found wanting, and abandoned 30 years ago. Much of what we have learned about individual differences has been disregarded. Rather than seeking new types of group-

ing and more effective ways of determining common factors of motivation, commitment, interest, aspiration, abilities, talents, et cetera, we have fallen back, in many instances, on traditional and highly questionable measures of "ability" as the major if not the sole factor in grouping.

Other examples of our failure to think creatively about the problem of organizing for more effective learning can be cited; untenable systems of grouping are not the only ones. We have too often thrust students, because of public pressure or arbitrary college entrance requirements, into classes in which they have neither interest nor ability. We have increased the number of credits required of all students for high school graduation on the apparent assumption that the soundness of an educational program is measured quantitatively and that whatever is good for one is good for all. We have unwittingly promoted the fallacy that certain subjects are "solid" while others are "soft" without raising the simple question, "Soft for whom?" We have too often fallen into the trap of assuming that to "enrich" a child's educational experience is to pour in more of the same, overlooking the fact that to enrich truly is to broaden and deepen understanding and wisdom.

We have too often forgotten in our "accelerated programs" that the child's rates of mental, physical, emotional, and social growth may vary a great deal. We have emphasized science and mathematics for the top 20 percent. But we have failed frequently in curriculum revision to recognize that mathematics is an important communicative skill for all and that general scientific literacy is essential to all for successful living in today's world. We have overlooked the fact that the home and the church, as well as the school, play an important role in the education of youth. In our sometimes confused search for "quality" we have too often assumed it to be measured by the "quantity" of homework assigned and have left too little time for the normal and very important activities of home and church. In short, in many instances we have become so enamoured with the term "quality" that we have forgotten not only about balance in the program and about individual differences, we have forgotten the pupils!

If we are to escape the limitations of tradition and tackle creatively the problem of organizing our schools for more effective learning, the approach must be on a broad front. We must critically scrutinize every aspect of organization; we must raise some searching questions.

A Critical Examination

The purpose of this issue of *Educational Leadership* is to make a beginning toward this kind of careful analysis. But the excellent articles prepared by a group of educators in whom we all have great confidence can only point a direction; they can only suggest broad guidelines. The basic responsibility for critical examination of existing patterns and for sound, constructive reorganization falls squarely on the shoulders of the administrative staffs at the local level.

As we carry on this task of reappraising our individual patterns of organization for learning, every aspect of the school program should be considered. We might start by giving attention to the prevailing administrative arrangements concerning the school day and the school year. Most school systems still operate with a daily and annual time schedule originally based largely on the

requirements of children in a rural, agrarian economy. Pupils in large urban centers, far removed from any responsibility for planting or harvesting crops, still follow a calendar which opens school shortly after Labor Day and closes it from the first to the middle of June. The growth and extension of summer schools is an indication of a growing recognition that the traditional school year should be re-examined. Yet many schools apparently regard the summer program as an "extra," charging tuition, and limiting summer work to "make-up" and "enrichment."

The daily schedule at the secondary level seems equally tradition-bound. Some questions come to mind: What evidence is there that a period of approximately one hour, with time out for passing between classes, is the most productive time arrangement? Why must all classes be taught in periods of equal length and for five days per week? Are there no priorities? Are there not some subjects which could be taught more effectively two or three days a week over a longer period of time? Does the Carnegie unit bind us forever to a fixed schedule? Of course, there are problems of programming for a principal who breaks the simple traditional pattern, but capable principals will find ways of doing it.

There is a tendency to consider the number of pupils in a class only in terms of "average class size" determined by a formula that fails to give an accurate appraisal of actual class size. It is easy to point with satisfaction to an average of 28, disregarding the 10 or 15 percent of the classes that may have from 35 to 40 pupils in them. What evidence is there on optimum class size? Why do we not more often approach this problem by considering the purposes of a particular course? Isn't it probable that basic purposes in some instances can be achieved in large groups while in others even 20 pupils might be too many? These are only a few of the questions that ought to be raised about some of our common administrative practices.

There are also aspects of our traditional classroom organization that ought to be scrutinized if we are to have more effective learning. In the primary grades we have long recognized the advantages of flexible groupings within classes. These groupings change not only from hour to hour but from day to day and from week to week. Why is this practice, used so effectively in primary grades, usually abandoned in the intermediate grades and almost never employed at the secondary level?

We follow almost universally the practice of assigning one teacher to a class —on the basis of grade level in the elementary school and on the basis of subject matter at the secondary level. Why? Why do we assume that one teacher must be all things to all pupils at a particular level or in a particular subject? Teachers are no more omnipotent than people! Each has his strengths and even the best have some weaknesses. Why do we not more often assign a group of teachers to work with a group of children—the teachers working as a team, each contributing his best to the total teaching load? Are there not ways in which the teachers assigned to a particular school could be reorganized for more effective learning?

In recent years, the technological change which has become characteristic of industry and business has penetrated the schools. The products of this new technology have not always been eagerly employed or even willingly accepted. Too often they have been re-

garded as a threat. Motion pictures were accepted reluctantly; radio was employed with skepticism; television was regarded with suspicion; and the new teaching machines are being viewed with alarm. Generally speaking, the public is much more willing to accept new advances in instructional tools than are the professional educators. Industry is making greater use of these tools than are the schools. Are we carefully and objectively examining our courses of study and content guides to determine how these new tools of learning can be used to increase the effectiveness of the school program? Are we considering the ways in which television can be used to supplement the work of the teacher? Are we giving proper consideration to the ways in which teaching machines may liberate the teacher from hours of practice or drill work, leaving him free for the more important aspects of creative teaching? Modern technology has created for us a great reservoir of teaching aids. Are we organized to use them effectively?

An important aspect of organizing for effective learning is that of building planning. Throughout the nation new schools are being constructed. Generally these are attractive and well-built. Most of the planning is sound and consistent with today's educational philosophy. Science classrooms and laboratories, industrial arts shops, art workrooms, and home economics facilities are generally well-designed and well-equipped. Too often the same cannot be said of the academic classrooms. Advances here have not kept pace with changing methods and new content. Today's mathematics classes need laboratory equipment; the social studies and language arts classes need separate areas for small group discussions and committee work; foreign language classes need space for laboratory equipment; all need adequate storage and filing space for the great variety of materials needed for effective learning. Again, there are questions: Are academic classes being planned in terms of today's methods or are they still best suited to the old question-and-answer routine? Is provision made for flexible arrangements? Is there adequate recognition of the "laboratory" method so advantageously used in academic areas?

Organizing for effective learning is a broad topic. It covers every phase of educational activity. It concerns all of us regardless of our particular assignments. No one escapes responsibility. The problems are ours to solve and how well we solve them will largely determine the quality of education in the decade ahead.

—CHESTER D. BABCOCK, *executive director, Department of Instruction and Curriculum Research, Seattle Public Schools, Washington; and member, ASCD Executive Committee.*

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Stuart E. Dean

Why Look at School Organization?

The administrator plays a key role in improving quality of instruction.

EVIDENCE is mounting on all sides that school organization practices are coming under increasing scrutiny. Increasingly questions are being raised with respect to the way in which school structure affects educational purpose. Many articulate spokesmen are suggesting that the administrative pattern of a school must be changed in response to new demands. Innumerable local communities are addressing themselves to the task of redoing the operational procedures of their schools to increase their effectiveness.

Plans, in growing numbers, are being proposed which will alter certain time-honored administrative practices so that the school may be free to meet the needs of all children. As these currents are assessed it becomes apparent that a major question is taking shape on the educational front: how should the school be organized? In the judgment of some observers, this concern bids to become a top priority for leaders in education.

To what can this resurgence of interest be attributed? In part, at least, it is a product of the times. The movement stems from a renewed and revitalized public realization of the importance of education. One of the by-products of the school-community partnership of recent years is an examination of the way in which a school is organized. Participating in this discussion are some who are reflecting broad concern, as well as others who are presenting particular points of view.

The questions are familiar: Is the elementary school curriculum becoming too crowded and cluttered? Is it possible for an elementary school teacher to be so adequately trained and knowledgeable in a multitude of subject areas that he can teach them all? Is it not apparent that our children must be taught more content? Does not our present method of training teachers produce many insufficiently qualified for this newer responsibility? Are student talent and potential being wasted because our schools are geared to the level of comfortable mediocrity? Should we not have more subject specialists in our faculties? How can a

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teacher be expected to meet the special needs of all children when he is saddled with the responsibility of a common level? These are but a few of the questions. From such expressions comes an exhortation to "do something" about "improving" school organization.

As a consequence, attention inevitably turns to consideration of: heterogeneous versus homogeneous grouping; the pros and cons of ability grouping; track plans, accelerated and/or "gifted" programs, teacher generalist versus teacher specialist, and a series of "plans." The inference derived from this sort of introspection suggests that the school is failing to do its job and that the basic fault lies at the doorstep of the type of organization. Ergo, let's change the administrative structure of the school and the problem will be solved.

In an oversimplified sense, the battle lines are being drawn between two basic types of school organization: on the one hand, one teacher per classroom for all subjects; and, on the other hand, a group of teachers for subject matter purposes. In characteristic American fashion it may be argued that there are merits in both procedures and that it is wrong to consider the issue solely upon an either-or basis. Doubtless there are *some* arguments of reason and logic in each point of view. However, for fear that current agitation may lead to regressive steps and repressive measures, a few cautions are in order.

Certainly the tremendous gains and the noteworthy contributions resulting from the advancing science of child growth and development must not be lost for the children of today. The debate is plagued by a wide range of differences and opinions, accompanied by a dearth of proven evidence, to support varied practices and sentiments. Objectivity is further bedeviled by loose semantics, confounded by puzzling paradoxes of meaning and application. Attempts of an earlier day to come to grips with the problem, through various "laboratory" plans, were relatively effective in adjustment to individual learning rates.

However, these plans did not otherwise modify the curriculum to meet individual needs. They overlooked the innate differences of individual potential and capability and continued to present the curriculum in the single dimension of intellectual exercise, without regard to other considerations. Finally, no single, prescribed organizational pattern can be expected to serve all localities and all children to a consistent degree. Inherent in the very essence of democratic education is the need for a latitude of flexibility and adaptability so that it may serve and react with its immediate environment.

Role of Administration

In looking at school organization, it is important to understand the role and function of school administration. There is a somewhat basic and widespread cultural tendency in the American style of democratic life to be critical of those in authority. It becomes increasingly imperative, therefore, that the true and relative role of school administration be properly assessed. Administration exists as a means to an end. It is not a control function but rather it is a service responsibility. Unwittingly cleavages and suspicions spring up.

We must strive for a sincere and reciprocal sense of sharing the need for and the contributions made by both the instructional staff and the administrative staff. All tendencies to dichotomize vital,

internal relationships must be avoided. Administrators have a distinct responsibility for the creation of an understanding of the tenet that good administration is an essential handmaiden to educational service and quality.

In somewhat the same way, the operation of a school must be properly assessed. A certain amount of management procedure is always necessary. This is an inescapable fact of life when large numbers of persons are involved. It is a basic requisite of a civilized society. The common good, in terms of mutual welfare, safety, responsibility, accountability, prudence, and preservation of individual rights, always necessitates some measure of systematic procedure, prevention, and protection. And so is it with a school. Given several hundred children and a staff of a score or more adults, any school administrator must evolve effective, efficient, and effortless ways of daily life. These are the primary essentials to group action, but they must be established, minimized, and held in proper perspective. Above all, they must not preoccupy the staff to a point wherein its major purpose—the instructional program—is relegated to secondary consideration.

Therefore, notwithstanding the current pressure to attack the problem in the realm of school organization, judgment and wisdom tell us that structure alone is not a high level goal. At best it is only essential machinery which underlies an educational program. Today, our first concern should not be how to effect an administrative organization for children, although this need must be faced. A more vital question is: How are we going to adapt classroom practices to the needs of children? This is the imperative challenge for school administrators.

Unless, in our desire and determination to provide the best structure, we relate this campaign to truly significant changes in teaching, we may well continue to be preoccupied with a superficial aspect and fail to grasp the gravity of the true issue. What transpires in the teaching-learning relationship is the true measure of a school. The kind of organization is only one contributor to the educational worthiness of the school.

Flexible Organization

The ideal type of school organization, probably, is one which reflects a high measure of fluidity and flexibility. A school structure which permits its program and its staff to adjust readily to changing conditions, needs, and values will reach greater educational accomplishment. Administrative design will not be a control which delimits educational opportunity for children but will become the service medium through which a rich and satisfying educational program can be offered. Children will cease being sacrificed on the altar of administrative expediency. Only then will we have learned that organization is to serve children, not children to serve organization.

In the development of this type of school organization and program, what is the role of the administrator? In these days of pressures, we realize that the school administrator carries a heavy responsibility. One of the most pressing problems for the educational leader today is how to preserve reason and rationale amid clutter and clamor. As he sits squarely in the center of this social scene he cannot fail to be impressed with the virtue of stable judgment and wise restraint. Contemporary proposals and demands must be evaluated with sobering clarity and must be judged

against long range perspective. Such wisdom is a top priority in effective educational leadership in these times.

Leadership? Today we discuss and deliberate: what it is; why we must have it; how we can get it; and why it now becomes the panacea for all our educational ills. Possibly a more popular concept has not evolved in years. It is, in fact, the very title of this periodical. The current ASCD Yearbook tells us: ". . . educational leadership . . . that action or behavior among individuals and groups which causes both the individual and the groups to move toward educational goals that are increasingly mutually acceptable to them."[1] As of this new day it becomes the priceless quality for which we have long been groping.

Actually, however, perhaps this is not a totally new, salutary concept. In all likelihood this is the very quality for which many have long been seeking. Perhaps, only now is it securing a new and welcome reception. One precaution, however, is suggested. Because so much is heard about leadership, care must be exercised to prevent this new emphasis from reducing itself to a lower level of preoccupation with stereotypes: platitudinous stereotypes which evolve into hackneyed attempts at a superficial level of successful operational management.

It is generally agreed that most leaders possess certain measures of baffling and magical qualities which are basically God-given; these are the sole property of the uniqueness of one's own personality. Beyond this point, however, most studies reveal that a leader develops this skill through careful study of himself and comprehensive study of people. The vast majority of problems and perplexities for school administrators—and, in fact, in most man-made enterprises—lie within the realm of human relations.

There are many ways in which the administrator can apply his skill and knowledge in these areas: tolerance of personality differences—strengths and weaknesses; acceptance of the seeming slow pace of the democratic process; the releasing of staff potential to full flower, without stifling restriction; the selection and assignment of personnel; sheer human understanding and kindness. It is quite likely that skill in human relationships—leadership—is the greatest individual contribution the school administrator can make towards the attainment of educational purposes.

Improving Instruction

How can the status leader furnish the creative leadership and professional vision that will support the kind of organization which will result in high quality work throughout the school? For a partial answer, reference is made to a recent national survey of public elementary school organization and administration conducted by the U. S. Office of Education.[2] Included in this nation-wide study of policies, practices, and trends in elementary school administration was a question dealing with problems and difficulties encountered by elementary school principals.

Against a prepared list of 17 administrative functions and duties, responding superintendents of schools were asked to indicate which responsibilities were presenting difficulty to their prin-

(Continued on page 415)

[1] Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development. *Leadership for Improving Instruction,* Yearbook 1960. Washington, D. C.: the Association, a department of the National Education Association, 1960, p. 27.

[2] Stuart E. Dean. *Elementary School Administration and Organization,* Bulletin 1960, No. 11. Washington, D. C.: U. S. Government Printing Office. (In Press.)

Arthur J. Lewis

Staff Utilization To Improve Learning

Three guidelines assist in organizing the staff to improve learning.

THE function of the professional staff of a school system is to provide the most effective learning experiences for its students. In contrast to the studies of personnel utilization which search for methods of reducing the number of professional staff members, this article will consider ways to organize and utilize a staff that will increase each child's learning.

When prime consideration is given to the learner and his learning, three guidelines emerge: (a) staff utilization should provide individualized instruction for each child; (b) staff services should help the teacher be more effective in working with his pupils; and (c) staff structure should recognize the professional stature of the teacher.

Individualized Instruction

Staff utilization should provide individualized instruction for each child. To aim that each pupil learn to the limit of his ability is not to suggest that each child be tutored. For example, appropriate learning experiences may include the use of electronic communication media with large groups, discussion sessions in small groups, and differentiated projects for individuals. The guideline, however, remains constant—each experience constitutes, at the time it is used, the most effective instrument of learning for each of the individual pupils involved.

Unfortunately, many of the present proposals for staff utilization either ignore or greatly minimize the importance of this guideline. Some who advocate these innovations apparently assume that all pupils are alike, or that all are alike except for the top few—the gifted. Thus they fail to see the need to provide varied programs which meet the needs of different students.

One support for the first guideline is that traditionally our society has stressed the value of an education for

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all. The Rockefeller Report, *The Pursuit of Excellence,* points out this interest in individuals. "A concern for the realization of individual potentialities is deeply rooted in our moral heritage, our political philosophy, and the texture of our daily customs." [1] The report goes on to stress the necessity of a quality education for all. "Our kind of society calls for the maximum development of individual potentialities *at all levels.*" [2]

A second source of support for the first guideline is to be found in child growth and development studies. Daniel Prescott has summarized much of this research in his list of six important determinants in a child's ability to learn: (a) organic factors, (b) the climate of love, (c) cultural background, (d) peer-group relations, (e) self-developmental factors, (f) self-adjustment factors.[3] The consideration of these determinants of learning demonstrates the great range of abilities within each classroom which must be provided for in any effective plan of staff utilization.

Several experimental programs are now being conducted in an effort to discover more effective ways to utilize the staff. These studies are of two general types: those designed to relieve teachers by the use of nonprofessional personnel, and those seeking better ways to utilize the individual competencies of present staff members.

Studies of the first type, which attempt to relieve some of the demands on professional personnel, include such varied approaches as: the use of teacher aides at Bay City, Michigan; the use of trained engineers and research scientists as laboratory assistants in Roseville, Minnesota; and the use of a secretary for each five or six teachers in the Peabody College Study. To measure these studies against the first guideline would require a detailed analysis of each. However, an innovation would seem to be in accord with the guideline if the use of nonprofessional personnel increases the amount of time a teacher has for working with individual students, without requiring an untrained person to take over professional responsibilities. In those instances when the aide is used only so that the teacher may deal with a greater number of pupils, and therefore pay less attention to individual differences, the practice is not consistent with the first guideline.

In studies of the second type, which provide for a new utilization of the particular talents of teachers, the specific plan and its effect on the learner must again be considered in applying the first guideline. For example, the plan of a school within a school described by Arthur Nagle of Allentown, Pennsylvania, is apparently consistent with this guideline.[4] In his plan a team of three, four or five secondary school teachers forms a small autonomous unit and operates as a school within a school. This organization provides for considerable planning among staff members and for large blocks of time for classes. This plan should increase teacher understanding of pupils and provide for greater attention to individual differences.

The use of automatic and electronic teaching devices may affect staff utiliza-

[1] Rockefeller Brothers Fund, Inc. *The Pursuit of Excellence, Education and the Future of America,* Panel Report V of the Special Studies Project. Garden City, N. Y.: Doubleday & Co., Inc., 1958. p. 1.

[2] *Ibid.,* p. 22.

[3] Daniel A. Prescott. *Factors That Influence Learning.* Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1958.

[4] Arthur J. Nagle. "The Team Concept in Organizing a Secondary School Program." *N.A.S.S.P. Bulletin.* April 1959. p. 86-87.

tion. Any consideration of these teaching aids should be related to the first guideline. For example, use of television to present certain types of material to large groups of children may have advantages if it makes it possible for the teacher to give needed attention to individuals within the group. Similarly, teaching machines, various visual aids, and recordings may make it possible for the teacher to increase pupil achievement. Curriculum workers should be creative in discovering how new mechanical devices can help the teacher provide a more effective program of individualized instruction.

Services to the Teacher

Staff services should help the teacher be more effective in working with his pupils. Despite a variety of proposals for utilization of staff and the introduction of new teaching aids, no one has seriously recommended the elimination of the teacher. Therefore, if we are to organize our staff to improve the quality of instruction we must examine ways of bringing help to the teacher.

The professional nonteaching staff for a school system should be developed by examining the kinds of help teachers need to do their most effective work. Such an analysis would identify at least three different types of help: assistance in programs of curriculum improvement, assistance in work with individual pupils, and assistance in providing for the coordination of various services.

As part of the need for assistance in curriculum improvement, many teachers desire direct help in improving their instructional techniques. For several years the Minneapolis Public Schools have provided this type of service to new teachers in the elementary schools. Each new teacher has the personal direct assistance of a teacher of the same grade level who has been released from classroom duties. This individual, known as a helping teacher, has no administrative responsibility for the new teacher. The helping teacher is available to assist the new teacher on any professional problem, to aid him in planning learning experiences, to provide demonstration teaching with the new teacher's class, and to plan meetings where the new teachers can discuss their mutual problems. New teachers have been most appreciative of this service, and a recent survey of all teachers showed a desire on the part of many experienced teachers to have the same kind of help.

Teachers also need assistance in another aspect of curriculum improvement. Effective programs recognize the desirability of having the professional staff work together in considering the objectives of education, in developing appropriate guidelines for subject content and methods of instruction, in developing effective means of measuring the results of teaching, and in identifying appropriate learning materials. To conduct this work successfully, teachers need the assistance of curriculum consultants who will coordinate the work of the staff and see that the decisions made by the group are carried out.

Teachers need help as they work with individual children. If education is to help each child develop to the limit of his ability, teachers need assistance in determining each pupil's potential and in measuring the extent to which he has reached this potential. The importance of knowing a pupil's intelligence quotient has long been accepted by teachers. The value of providing the teacher with additional information about each child is being recognized. For example,

Symonds has suggested, " . . . teachers need to be helped in their assessment or diagnosis of the emotional stability of a child. It is as important for a teacher to know the anxiety level of a child with regard to learning tasks as it is to know his I.Q. I foresee schools of the future giving children tests to determine their anxiety level which will be on a par with tests of intellectual level." [5]

And if the child fails to reach his potential, what then? First, the teacher needs to understand the basic causes for the child's failure to achieve. Next, he needs suggestions as to what he can do within the classroom to improve the quality of learning for the child. Possibly the teacher will need help in placing the child in a special class, or in gaining assistance from the parents or from community agencies in removing some of the child's blocks to learning.

In addition to assistance in curriculum improvement programs, and in work with individual pupils, teachers need an effective and productive environment in which to work. The necessary services should be coordinated to provide an efficient school plant equipped with the best available aids, and building responsibilities should be organized to create the optimum morale for teachers. Professional personnel need the kind of coordination and encouragement that will make possible their working together creatively as they share ideas and develop plans for curriculum improvement; they need the kind of leadership that develops a climate conducive to the professional growth of the staff.

Staff structure should recognize the professional stature of the teacher. A first step in developing this structure is to decide what competencies within the professional nonteaching staff will provide the desired help to teachers.

Most staffs include curriculum resource people who are experts at teaching in a certain grade level or in teaching a certain subject. The instructional program will also be improved by the services of a child psychologist, a school nurse, and a school social worker. In actual practice, however, providing professional workers from several disciplines may work a hardship on the teacher, since he must confer with so many different individuals to understand a single child. In the secondary schools this problem is somewhat resolved through the use of the counselor. In some Minneapolis public schools the functions of the school nurse and the social worker are performed by one individual in order to reduce the number of people with whom the teacher must confer. This experiment has had an enthusiastic response from teachers. Several other school systems are instituting counselors in the elementary schools to coordinate these services.

Many other competencies could be added to the foregoing list. However, the key in following the third guideline is that the principal recognize the professional responsibility of the teacher and the total staff to provide the teachers with the most effective help. A school system may have all of the needed competencies on its staff and still provide a minimum of help to the classroom teacher. In order for the staff to be effective, proper relationships between service personnel and classroom teachers and among various members of the service personnel staff must be established. This relationship depends upon some basic attitudes toward the teacher and teach-

[5] Percival M. Symonds. *What Education Has To Learn from Psychology.* New York: Bureau of Publications, Teachers College, Columbia University, 1958. p. 71-72.

ing. All nonteaching staff members should recognize teachers as mature, responsible, professional co-workers doing the important work of teaching boys and girls. Personnel on the school staff, other than teachers, are there for the express purpose of helping the teacher be more effective. They should constantly be evaluating their worth by asking themselves the question, "How have I helped teachers do a better job?" This statement of relationship does not minimize the importance of nonteaching personnel; rather, it is through allowing the creative talents of teachers to be released that the position of a staff consultant reaches its maximum worth.

Studies in industry show that in general a complex administrative structure seems to contribute to poor morale on the part of the staff. Accordingly, industries have been moving in the direction of a decentralized type of organization. Harold F. Smiddy, vice president, General Electric Corporation, has indicated some of the basic principles behind a decentralized organization.[6] Some of these principles seem to be applicable to school systems; for example, authority to make decisions should be placed as close as possible to where the action occurs; real authority must be delegated; there should be faith that men in decentralized jobs will make sound decisions in a majority of cases; the organization must believe that an aggregate of many individually sound decisions is better for business than one centralized plan; the main role for members of service components is to provide help and advice so that operating managers can make correct decisions; responsibility commensurate with decision making authority must be accepted and exercised at the local level.

This trend toward decentralization is also apparent in school organizations. The project for Cooperative Development of Public School Administration in a recent publication, *Your School and Staffing*, has listed the following guideline: "The administrative staff should be organized to provide individual persons on a staff and individual units in a school system with as much freedom for individual initiative as is consistent with efficient operation and prudential controls."[7] Thus the effect is to reduce the number of levels of authority within a school system and to place much greater responsibility for decision making with the local school principal and faculty. This does not minimize the contribution of other professional personnel; the principal, for example, should seek the advice and counsel of others as a basis for faculty decisions. The relationship becomes one of a professional person providing advice rather than of a supervisor dictating policy.

The manner of operation of members of the school staff is more important to the success of the educational program than is the organization of the staff. Although a discussion of democratic administration is beyond the scope of this article, the importance of a cooperative approach to school administration must be emphasized.

In summary, the staff should be organized and utilized to promote effective learning of each individual child. To do this, services that will be of maxi-

[6] Harold F. Smiddy. "Advantages of Decentralization in Achieving the Objectives of Large Organizations." *Strengthening Structural and Operational Patterns in Large School Systems.* New York: Teachers College, Columbia University, 1958. p. 67-73. (Mimeographed.)

[7] Cooperative Development of Public School Administration. *Modern Practices and Concepts of Staffing Schools.* New York: C.D.P.S.A., 1956. p. 17.

mum assistance to teachers must be provided.

These services should be organized in such way that they will be of greatest benefit to the classroom teacher. The provision of the best services, organized in the most effective manner, is not enough to guarantee a good program of education. In addition, the working relationships within the school system must be based on respect for the worth of each individual member of the school staff and on an appreciation of his professional competence. Only in such an atmosphere can the creative talent of the teacher be utilized to provide the best possible program of education for each boy and girl.

School Organization

(Continued from page 409)

cipals in terms of first, second, and third choices. The list comprised management and operational functions; instructional program responsibilities; staff and community relationships; special educational services; and pupil accounting procedures.

In compiling the results to this question all answers were weighted on a first, second, and third choice scale. The results show that Improvement of Instruction remains the number one problem for principals, with a total weight of 5619 responses. The second most pressing problem is Provision for Exceptional Children, with a total weighted response of 3753. In third place is the problem of Obtaining Adequate Physical Facilities, with a weighted response of 1482. Fourth is Programs of Special Education, with 1474. Fifth on this list is the Recruitment of Teachers, with a total weighted response of 1082.

An analysis of these returns shows that the perennial problem of relating the efforts of the school administrator to the improvement of instruction persists. This is not a new thought, for traditionally and historically the principal has always borne this responsibility. Yet, here is timely evidence to re-establish the validity of the need. As a matter of fact, too, it is significant to realize that four of the first five topics on this list of problems for principals relate directly to the instructional program. In these days of pressures and demands, perhaps it is not amiss to conclude that school administrators can be most responsive to needs and urgencies by becoming more closely involved and identified with their programs of classroom teaching.

Yes, we should look at the organization of our schools. We need to determine if administrative organization is a factor which is impeding free expression of educational opportunity for children. But, in so doing, we should not make a fetish of the structural pattern, in the misguided faith that organization in itself guarantees the educational quality we are seeking. Administrative procedures can do much to aid a good program but they alone cannot solve the problem.

The rightful place of inquiry lies in the classroom. What is being done to relate the teaching process and materials to the educational needs of children is the proper point of emphasis. Through the exemplification of leadership qualities, by directing his efforts and attentions to the instructional program, and by increasing his own skills and sensitivities in the supervision of instruction, the school administrator may play a key role in improving the quality of the school.

Douglas R. Jones

Space: How Organized, K-12

Effective and imaginative use of space is a prime task of the school.

TODAY as never before teachers and administrators are faced with the important problem of space utilization. A continuous search goes on for better use of current space and finding more space for increasing numbers of students in our classrooms. The problem becomes more significant as we continue to have an increase in the number of children without a corresponding increase in the number of classrooms. This is an ever-present struggle that teachers must overcome if our schools are to function properly in a modern society.

No matter how well the school plants are planned and built, the role of the classroom teacher cannot be overlooked in the organization of the classroom space. The classroom teacher is the most important person in the school organization. Also, the educational philosophy of the individual teacher plays an important part in how the classroom is organized. Whether the teacher is traditional or progressive will determine to a great extent how the space in the classroom is used.

A traditional teacher usually will prefer a regimented situation with "fastened-down" desks with very little movement and attention to individual differences. These conventional teachers usually do not teach youngsters at their basic levels of ability so the organization of space does not seem so important. In the regimented classroom, the opportunities for communication and learning are not as plentiful as they should be. Often the traditional teacher sees movement in class as a source of disciplinary problems.

A progressive teacher will try to improve the space situation in his classroom. This teacher usually sees the relationship between the activity being carried on and the space needed and available. Although many classrooms have become crowded and have moved far from the ideal conditions, the progressive teacher still tries to seek activi-

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ties and procedures that provide for a greater opportunity for group learning and movement. Rather than give up completely, the teachers will try although they have to modify their program to improve their space situations. It is hoped that most of our teachers continue to grow and to seek improvement to meet the changes that confront us today.

This is not to say that some traditional teachers cannot do an effective job of teaching. No single method of space arrangement will meet the needs of everyone. Good teaching is going on in many classrooms with traditional teachers, but it may be possible that more meaningful learning will take place with better instructional techniques and space control. The importance of the "working" philosophy of the teacher and the school cannot be overlooked as attention is focused on space utilization.

Elementary Classrooms

Since a majority of the elementary schools have self-contained classrooms, the teacher must arrange his room so that the space can be used to its best advantage. In the modern classroom, the teacher should have a variety of activities for identifying and meeting individual and group needs. Flexibility and livability seem to be the key words in the utilization of space. Careful planning by the teacher and pupils must take place in order to assure freedom of movement and flexibility of arrangement in the elementary classroom.

The following activity areas should be set up to permit the classroom to serve a variety of activities:

1. An art corner having wall easels; a working table with a waterproof top; and clay, paper, paints, brushes, and other art materials which should be available at all times for both formal lessons and free time.

2. A science corner with an aquarium, terrarium, ample space for exhibits of nature and science materials, equipment for simple science experiments, and adequate storage space for science materials.

3. A library corner located near the window with chairs, library table, bookcases with low, open book shelves suitable for the large books of the elementary school.

4. A music center with a record player, records, radio, T.V., or small piano.

5. A work area which should include a sink with hot and cold water; work benches of desired height, wood, other materials; and ample storage space.

6. A teacher's area with a desk and a chair, additional chairs for adult visitors and conferences, and filing cabinets for pupils' records and teaching material.

7. A teaching area designed for individual and group instruction with a teacher's chair and several chairs for the pupils, a chalkboard, a hinged chart board, and a hinged bulletin board.

8. A main activity area for games, indoor play, rhythms, and projects which should be created by moving the chairs and desks. As indoor equipment, large blocks and boxes to be used in this area for the kindergarten.

All of these areas should be flexible and movable with the possibility of adding or deleting if necessary. A refrigerator, recessed in the wall, a small stove, a sink, and cupboards, especially if a central cafeteria is not available, are desirable for the kindergarten.

Supplementary Spaces

1. A cloakroom near the door with open compartments.

2. Toilets and lavatory rooms accessible from the classroom and the playground.

3. Space for resting or napping in the classroom or adjacent to the classroom. Fold-

ing cots, blankets, or rugs that may be stored and brought in.

4. A door opening directly from the classroom to the outside playground.

5. Storage space in the classroom, including space under window seats; work counters; tool cabinets; extra drawers for games, toys and materials; an exhibit case, and flat drawers for paper. An outside shelter for storage of garden tools, sand toys, wheel toys, and physical education equipment is desirable.

Secondary School Classrooms

The conventional classroom of the secondary school has changed greatly in the past few years. For many years the secondary classrooms were small, barren, bleak, gloomy, box-like rooms. In this drab cultural environment, a harassed teacher was trying to teach students under the handicaps of inadequate lighting, poor ventilation, and distracting noises. These inadequate classrooms for mathematics, language arts, and social studies penalized the students a great deal.

The philosophy of the secondary school is also reflected in the utilization of space. Whether the needs and interests of the students are recognized determines the types of classrooms needed. Many high schools have a comprehensive program including courses in general and vocational education. The various practices of grade, age, and interest grouping make it impossible to describe classrooms for all organizational patterns. It will be assumed that a comprehensive educational program with a departmentalized organization for instruction will be used by a majority of schools.

Usually in the secondary school we find two distinct types of classrooms—the recitation or academic room and the specialized laboratories and shops. Attention in this article will be focused on the instructional rooms.

Academic Instruction Rooms

Today as the secondary schools begin to have a closer look at individual differences, interests and needs, the academic classrooms have become learning laboratories with special features to provide a variety of activities. The modern classroom has been lengthened to provide more "working area" for directed study. Provisions are also being made for group activities by obtaining movable tables and chairs and more space is being made available for storing materials and supplies to improve instructional practices. Reference books have been placed in movable bookcases to help with utilization of space. Many of the situations described under elementary classrooms are also being used to provide more flexible and livable situations in the secondary school classrooms.

Specialized Laboratories and Shops

Usually a large secondary school provides for six specialized laboratories and shops in science, music, art, homemaking, business education, and special shops. These special classrooms must be built with the purpose of each room carefully planned.

Many schools have remedied the situation by building more space or making better use of the current space. One school improved its science classrooms by removing the "fastened-down" furniture and designing a flexible laboratory with stationary science tables around the walls of the room and using movable furniture that could be arranged in many different ways. Other schools are using

museums, school gardens, and the school's mechanical installations for teaching space.

In business education, multipurpose rooms are planned in which drop-head typewriter desks are used so that other subjects may be taught in the room. Machines on casters that can be locked in a stationary position are also being used to conserve space. Other examples of space utilization in specialized laboratories and shops could be described that make teaching at the secondary level more effective.

What Can Be Done

Ideal conditions and theory are easy to describe. Many teachers would cherish the idea of a modern classroom with all the areas just described, but chances are they will never teach under such favorable conditions. Most teachers must teach in old buildings and make the most of what they have. Some of our best teaching is found in outmoded school buildings. The key person, the teacher, has faced the problem of space and has done something about it. These teachers have not been afraid to experiment and find new ways of using extra space.

In the Wahl-Coates Laboratory School in Greenville, North Carolina, some of the teachers met the problem of the increasing number of students through the use of the adjoining storage room as a teaching area for a small group of students for reading. By moving part of the group out of the room, the teachers were able to have more space for movement and learning. Ingenuity and creativeness helped these teachers to find needed space for the teaching of basic skills.

A unique solution to the problem of space has been offered by a first grade teacher in Nashville, Tennessee. She has removed all the standard furniture from her room except about 10 desks. The group is constantly involved in several different types of activities so that she needs only about 10 places for children to sit and write. The rest of the time they are busy with other types of activities in the library corner, the science center, or the work area. It is quite likely that one reason we have too little space in classrooms is that, on the assumption that all children need to have a place to sit and do the same thing at the same time, we have too much of the standard furniture.

Another solution that has been offered suggests the use of the top six feet of space in most classrooms. It may be that around the walls could be located storage space for materials with a movable ladder, much like that which is used in hardware stores.

Outside space may help to solve the problem especially in the warmer sections of the country. Teachers can set up teacher "corners" outside under the trees. For economic reasons, the air conditioning of schoolrooms is out of the question at the present time for most schools. Since heat often becomes unbearable indoors, the child will be more comfortable outside and will be able to learn more easily. Outside corridors are built in many schools and may be used as a small learning area. Necessity for gaining space will force many teachers to move part of their groups outside but close enough for careful supervision. Privacy may be obtained by having a hedge or wall about four feet high around the teaching area.

In many of our schools we have much wasted space in the corridors in elementary schools. The space above

(Continued on page 464)

Planning time use
can help to free teachers
for creative effort.

Jess R. Beard

Time: How Utilized

EFFECTIVE utilization of time has long been a problem to the classroom teacher in both his professional capacity as a teacher of children and youth and in his private or personal activities. We are discovering that there are more and more things to do both in our teaching activities and in our personal lives and that there is only so much time in which to do these. Time itself is a fleeting phenomenon. We think that we have two or three weeks in which to accomplish a task and before we know it the appointed time has arrived. We think that there will be time to do something tomorrow and suddenly discover that tomorrow has come and gone without achieving the goal. It is impossible to hoard or save time from one day to another, so what we do each day must have meaning and significance.

How we do use the time at our disposal seems to depend in a large measure upon our deep-felt desires and goals. We have all discovered that even when we are busiest we can still find time to do that activity in which we have a wholehearted dedication or an overwhelming desire that becomes almost a compulsion. This phenomenon also seems to apply in our professional lives. When a school faculty decides with enough determination to undertake a project in which all members are deeply concerned, then time is found to pursue that project to its successful completion.

The problem of how effectively to use time in our teaching-learning activities in and out of the classroom is not a new problem. Teachers since the beginnings of formal education have probably grappled with the basic problem of how to use their time and help students utilize their time to the very best advantage. However, there are certain new facets of the problem which gain added importance in present day society.

Today there is so much more to learn. The increased tempo of living in a civilization rapidly approaching automation has brought with it an increase in the knowledge and skills necessary to enjoy the full life that has been a reward of the developing automation. This means, of course, that on the one hand the schools are faced with pressures to add more and more to the total curriculum

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offerings in an effort to help children and youth acquire the matrix of skills, knowledge, understandings and attitudes necessary to live a successful life in a complex era. Intercultural and interracial understandings, space-age concepts, driver education, and global geography are only some of the examples of new curriculum areas that were relatively unknown only a generation ago. On the other hand, there are curriculum pressures that almost force us to teach and to learn better all those subject disciplines that have always been the backbone of our formal educational system. The increased emphasis upon mathematics, science, and all the forms of communication are examples of areas that seem to demand greater understanding for effective living in the decades ahead.

Our greater insight into the learning process and into child growth and development has also caused us to scrutinize how we use the time available to us for teaching-learning purposes. The major problem we face in this area is how best to use the interests of children and youth as a basis for significant learnings. A second problem is to capitalize upon what we know about the learning process itself in order to time and to pace learning activities for best understanding and retention.

Use of time also naturally involves a question as to the way in which time is spent. A few decades ago we placed major emphasis upon the quantity of time youth spent in pursuing the various curriculum areas. Elaborate percentage formulas were devised that gave us indices for the amount of time to be spent on the sciences as opposed to the humanities, on vocational education as opposed to liberal education, and on recitation as opposed to individual study. Fortunately, curriculum development has moved from a quantitative analysis of time spent in the various curriculum areas to the more fruitful analysis of the quality of time so spent. We are, however, still plagued by the very human trait of divided attention and semi-concentration. Although it is probably impossible and undesirable to eradicate this trait, at least we should examine with more care the way in which we use time in learning activities.

Aims and Purposes

Perhaps an answer to at least some of the questions raised thus far lies in a reexamination of the basic aims and purposes of education. If a school faculty can rather clearly delimit the areas considered most important for students to explore, then individual teachers have guideposts to follow in utilizing the time available for instructional purposes. Such a delineation would give increased insight into the desirable emphases that education should take. This approach would begin to put into perspective the hierarchy of values deemed essential for youth as they progress through the various stages of formal education. An examination of these values would immediately lead to an analysis of how students acquire the values and would necessitate a restudy of the principles of learning and development and the way in which time is spent in learning can be improved.

The classroom teacher must also face the daily problems involved in effectively using his time in his teaching procedures and techniques. The relative amount of limited time to be devoted to the slow learners, the average learners, and the accelerated students in any classroom is a dilemma facing almost every teacher

in the nation. He must make decisions regarding the amount of time to devote to group instruction as contrasted with individual help. He must decide whether to use group or individual projects, whether to pursue in greater detail a topic of special interest to his students or to proceed to another that may have greater significance, and whether or not to devote part of his class time to supervised study.

These are major problems to the individual teacher, and in a large measure his success and satisfaction in teaching will depend upon his ability to acquire acceptable solutions. The issues as stated are primarily in terms of how the teacher uses his time. The same issues, of course, apply to the students' use of their time. Although the teacher is concerned with how he uses his time in his instructional procedures, his primary concern is effectively utilizing the students' time in efficient learning.

The attempts at unification of the curriculum areas through the self-contained classroom in the elementary school and the core programs of the secondary school have resulted in teachers being responsible for children for longer periods of time, and, therefore, being able to exercise greater freedom in use of the longer time blocks. Fortunately for education, the day has long since passed when the principal or superintendent could look at the clock and tell exactly what was going on in any classroom under his supervision. With the greater freedom given to teachers, however, goes the greater responsibility of deciding on how to use that freedom. It is becoming increasingly important, therefore, for supervisory personnel to assist teachers in formulating basic criteria for arriving at decisions regarding the use of time in the teaching-learning process.

Criteria for Time Use

One such criterion has been that of stimulation to learn. Stimulation to learn, of course, has always been a basic requirement for learning, but today it takes on a new significance. It is patently impossible to learn all there is to learn through formal education. Our emphasis, therefore, must be upon activities and endeavors that will stimulate youth to pursue knowledge in addition to, as well as after they have ceased, their formal education. Viewed in this manner, the joys of discovery and learning become all important and time spent in helping youth to share this venture can be amply justified.

A second criterion involves the balance between activities involved in achieving personal needs and societal needs. This is not really an issue today since teachers and curriculum experts generally agree upon the necessity of such a balance and because the needs of society are so far-reaching that personal needs usually easily mesh into the greater needs of the society.

A third criterion has been a workable understanding of the principles or generalizations of the topic being studied. We should no longer be content to assume that students have learned if they are able to memorize or repeat facts and data to which they have been exposed. Rather, we should insist that students be able to understand the interrelationships of the facts, be able to draw generalizations, and be able to use the facts and generalizations in the solution of problems. The key to teaching procedures can frequently be found in this criterion. If it takes additional time or methods for the student to assimilate the materials or knowledge so that he can use it, then that additional time has

been well spent. Learning without meaning or insight has little value to the learner. The teacher's objective, therefore, is always to use whatever method or time is needed for the student to be able to understand with insight and meaning anything that is included in the curriculum.

The cooperative development of such criteria as the three discussed would be most helpful to the individual teacher in trying to plan not only his time but his students' time to the greatest potential maximum for effective and efficient learning.

What Activities Are Essential?

Today we are becoming increasingly aware of the numerous teaching-related and nonteaching activities that teachers should or must do. The collecting of money, the checking of papers, the recording of vital data, and the supervision of cocurricular activities all take an undue proportion of the teacher's time. Kindergarten teachers zip and unzip coats and overshoes while secondary teachers "police" the corridors. Although such activities may be necessary, they are not generally very professionally rewarding. No doubt many creative beginning teachers have been disillusioned with the amount of time so spent. In some school systems, the amount of time spent in such nonteaching duties becomes enormous. In fact, it has been estimated that as much as one-fourth of the teacher's time is spent in such routine activities. Undoubtedly, such activities are at the expense of creative planning and stimulating teaching.

In an effort to solve some of the problems of efficient use of teachers' time, many school systems have devised ingenious programs, usually of an experimental nature. Although some of the programs are frankly the result of teacher shortage or overcrowded conditions, they may offer clues for further study and analysis.

The increased use of educational television and of mechanical teaching devices has opened up vistas of educational opportunities. Although it is unlikely that such methods will to any great extent alleviate the teacher shortage, certainly they do help to utilize more efficiently the teacher's time. Modern language laboratories make it possible to provide group and individual instruction uniquely adapted to the needs of the students, and television brings to the classroom knowledge and facilities not available to the typical classroom teacher.

Schools are becoming increasingly conscious of the need for clerical help and are freeing teachers of the more routine tasks by hiring secretaries and clerks who handle many of the details of preparing teaching materials and of recording data. The experimental use of teacher assistants has also made it possible to free teachers for more creative instructional procedures.

Team teaching and the doubling of class sections for demonstrations or lectures have been explored in some school systems. Such methods as these allow for adequate preparation time and for small sections devoted to individual help or to discussion groups. In almost any school system one can find some such effort aimed at utilizing to the maximum extent the teacher's time or the educational facilities. We probably need, though, to develop our research techniques so that experimental programs of this nature may result in information that can be used with a greater degree of validity.

On the more personal level teachers have difficulties in budgeting their time for creative living. In an era in which skilled workers have more time for recreational activities due to a shorter work week, the demands on a professional worker are, if anything, more exacting. Teachers have larger class size and larger class loads, the school day and school year are increasing in length, and committee and professional improvement activities have multiplied. In addition, there is an increased desire to participate more actively in the cultural, social and civic activities of community life. Is it any wonder that teachers ask, "Where will it end?"

Children, too, are involved in a multiplicity of activities. Organized activities such as scouts and church groups demand a large proportion of their time. Large numbers of children are involved in private lessons, generally music or dancing, that take much of their time and energy. It is not unusual to find children and youth involved in after school organized activities almost every day of the week. Such activities are in addition to the hours spent in school and any homework that may result from the school day.

The rapid-pace, little-free-time trend is no different for children and teachers than for any other segment of the population. A characteristic of American life seems to be that everyone is in a hurry to move from one activity to another. Teachers who become overly disturbed by the pace of modern-day life for children may be comforted by the learnings that children acquire because of or in spite of that pace. The individual teacher probably needs to regulate his activities so that he has a balanced life, providing time for professional improvement as well as opportunities for hobbies and recreation along with the community endeavors of his choice.

This examination of the use of time has not attempted to approach the topic from a scientific viewpoint. One can read the quantitative reports of how teachers use their time from the numerous documented studies available. The approach here has been to raise certain selected questions on the utilization of time and to explore possible solutions.

To gain a rationale for the effective utilization of time in the present era requires an examination of the objectives and values we hold and of how we can best use the limited time available to us to help children and youth acquire those values more efficiently. Individual teachers probably need criteria within the framework of those values in order to arrive at decisions regarding teaching-learning methods to be used for the maximum development of themselves and their students. Last, but not least, we need to explore ways and means of freeing teachers from routine, time-consuming tasks so that they may have the time to be creative teachers. Then they can live rich and wholesome lives that will be an inspiration to students growing up in a fast-moving world in which time is but a fleeting element of life.

Those interesting materials you heard mentioned as a result of the ASCD Conference in Washington may be listed in

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Ways of Working with Learners

A MAJOR concern of public education in the United States is the maximum development of every child's potentialities. Schools, as social institutions, are given the responsibility of providing opportunities for young people to acquire the understandings, skills, attitudes and appreciations which will insure intelligent and satisfying participation in school, home and community life. In a democratic society, it is important that every citizen realize his capacities, learn to live harmoniously with others, and accept his civic responsibilities.

A highly technical, specialized, and rapidly changing world has caused life in the United States to become increasingly complex. The school program designed to meet the needs of today's youth will of necessity be different from that provided a few decades ago. New understandings, skills and attitudes are required for effective living in today's world and in the world of tomorrow. Our country needs citizens who can read but who think as they read, who speak correctly and take part in group discussions intelligently, and who make decisions based on careful weighing of evidence.

Each school system has its objectives and instructional program which serve to direct pupil growth and therefore determine what kinds of learning opportunities will be provided. The curriculum organization and the ways of working depend upon what the school expects to do for the pupils who attend.

There is no one ideal way of working with learners. The best way probably includes a combination of many ways, each used when it seems to be most effective for a particular individual or group of children to achieve a given purpose. The increasing knowledge of child growth and development, conditions and trends in contemporary life, and accepted purposes provides guides in determining the learning opportunities made available. Learning is im-

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proved when teachers identify major purposes in their work and seek to determine the extent to which these purposes are being achieved. These purposes, as identified by a well-known educator,[1] may include helping the student to: (a) acquire an understanding of himself, (b) acquire an understanding of the world in which he lives, (c) develop adequate patterns of behavior, (d) develop a set of defensible goals, (e) develop adequate techniques and competencies needed to achieve these goals, (f) develop proficiency in critical thinking, and (g) gain competency in evaluating self-identified goals.

A significant factor in determining the kind and quality of learning that takes place in the classroom is the teacher. New buildings, more and better instructional materials, and more special services will not necessarily result in better learning experiences for young people. An effective teacher believes that all students have worth and dignity. He has a genuine respect for them as individuals, and they know it. Patience with and sympathetic understanding of boys and girls, a sincere interest in their welfare, a mature and well-adjusted personality, a cheerful outlook, and professional competence are essential qualities for the teacher. He must also have some understanding of what is important to be learned. He must also know much about the background and readiness for learning of each pupil and how he feels about himself and others.

The classroom environment, including the physical, intellectual, emotional, and social aspects, plays an important role in determining the quality of learning opportunities provided for young people. It is important that pupils live and work in a classroom that is attractive, functional, stimulating, and has a friendly work atmosphere that makes possible the achievement of accepted purposes. The learner must feel accepted and free to examine new ideas and assume responsibility in making decisions and to do his part in carrying forward the program of work.

If the school is to offer each student the opportunity for maximum development of his abilities, the program of work and the practices and procedures used must be those most effective for each individual. The best kind of learning goes on when rich and varied experiences are provided, when there is opportunity to engage in reflective thought and problem-solving, when emphasis is placed on pupil participation in planning, executing and evaluating the work, and experiences are provided for creativeness, self-direction, and critical thinking.

Varied Approaches Useful

Studies have shown that older and more modern ways of working are about equally effective in teaching subject matter. However, an approach that includes pupil-participation activities will provide opportunity for the development of many kinds of desirable behavior in addition to subject matter learnings. The pattern of organizing a class for learning selected by a teacher is directly related to the goals desired. If the teacher interprets the needs of the pupils as concerned mainly with academic achievement he will have a more rigidly organized class. If the goals in-

[1] This statement of purposes is adapted from an article, "The Role of College Teaching," by Truman M. Pierce, dean of the School of Education, Auburn University, Auburn, Alabama, in a bulletin *Preparing College Teachers.* This bulletin was published by The University of Kentucky and The Southern Regional Board.

PHOTO COURTESY THE AUTHOR

Various approaches can be used in sharing information and ideas.

clude also social and emotional growth of young people, a more flexible classroom organization will be provided. The class may be organized around three kinds of activities: total group activities, small group activities, and individual work.

There are many types of activities which may be more effective and economical of time for both students and teacher with the class working together as a whole. Some of these are the following:

Exploration of possible areas for study

Introduction of new topics or problems for study where purposes and ways of working are determined

Planning regarding learning activities and methods of study

Explanations needed for understanding of concepts or a new process

Class discussions of issues where pertinent ideas may be examined and different positions presented or defended and where generalizations, understandings and appreciations may be developed

Summarizing what has been learned and helping students in evaluating what is important, which summaries may be made by the teacher to help clarify the discussion or by individual pupils or small groups and presented to the class

Activities for enrichment purposes

Evaluation of knowledge learned, skills mastered, and appreciations and attitudes developed

Sharing small group study with the class, using various ways of sharing the information and ideas of the subgroups with the

total group such as through panels, debates, symposiums, forums, exhibits, dramatic presentations, and creative writing.

The teacher's problem is to plan for the wide range of differences among pupils in the particular class with which he is working. Experimentation and research have emphasized grouping within the class as a way of improving the learning and meeting the individual needs of its members. There is little evidence that indicates the best approach to this class grouping. Different purposes and different situations will require different procedures. There is nothing magical about groups; they do not necessarily provide better learning and should be used as a means to an end and not an end in itself. Small groups may be formed to achieve such purposes as these:

Handling classroom routines and housekeeping duties

Grouping should provide for individual needs.

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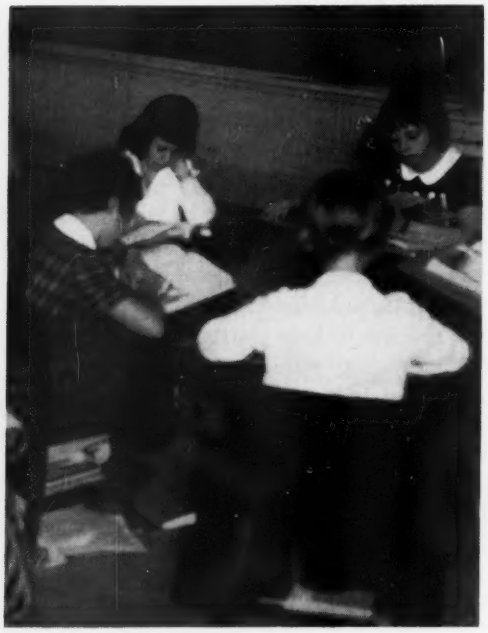

Group research and more detailed study of concepts, ideas and problems

Improving human relations and helping pupils in their social education, giving opportunity to work on a common task and develop skills of cooperative planning, and respect for each other's ideas and feelings

Providing more and varied opportunity for each person to participate

Giving students an opportunity to pursue special interests

Providing for additional practice in developing skills

Gathering and organizing data pertinent to the solution of a problem

Permitting the teacher to work with a small group of a narrower range of ability or achievement to give more specialized instruction.

Some general principles that may serve as a guide in grouping children for instruction may include:

Grouping should be flexible and specifically suited to established purposes.

Groups should provide for meeting individual needs and interests of boys and girls.

Grouping may be of two general types—interest or self-choice group, and grouping in terms of level of achievement or particular need in a subject.

Grouping should provide opportunity for the child to gain a satisfactory balance between his personal growth needs and his needs for systematic sequential instructional skills.

The size of groups should be determined by the purpose and nature of the activity, by the number of children who have a need for the particular skill or who have a real interest in the activity, by the number the teacher can satisfactorily guide, and by the age and maturity of the pupils.

Grouping in skills should be made on the basis of continuous study and evaluation of children's needs and progress.

A child should be in a group where he will have a possibility of some success and at the same time there must be a challenge.

PHOTO COURTESY THE AUTHOR

Organizing for learning is directly related to goals.

Grouping can be more effective when adequate records are kept and used.

Opportunities for Learning

Good planning will also make provision for students to do some individual work. This may be pursuing individual interests through research, investigation and experimentation; some creative activity in writing, music or art; or it may be a time for practice and drill appropriate to individual needs and of a type that will provide depth and variety. There should be some time which the teacher devotes to helping individuals with their problems and concerns.

A good school day should provide opportunity for a pupil to have a variety of carefully chosen experiences and over a period of time a chance to participate in total class activities, small group work, and also pursue his individual concerns.

Examples of the way four teachers have worked with groups of children to achieve purposes are given in the descriptions which follow.

Poetry

John Masefield's "Sea Fever" captured the interest and imagination of a sixth grade group of children and led to a study of poetry.[2] The children brought

[2] Reported by Mrs. Ludie Williams, Livingston, Alabama.

their favorite poems to share with the class and the teacher also shared some of hers.

Many children enjoyed participation in creative dramatic activities based upon their poems. Some made shadow boxes and pictures suggested by the poetry.

One day the pupils decided to try writing their own poems. The teacher read some poetry to the class and then talked about "picture" words. They spoke about colors and what these colors meant to them. The children grouped themselves by choice. There was an all-girl group, an all-boy group, and two mixed groups. Three of the groups chose a color as inspiration for their poem, while the fourth group chose sounds. With some assistance from the teacher each group took the individual expressions of the members and combined these into poems which were later published in the school paper.

Study of Seeds

A real and enriching learning experience began when a second grader brought a coconut to school.[3] As the children examined and talked about the coconut, differences in opinion were expressed about seeds. The teacher, recognizing an opportunity for the children to discover and find out, thoughtfully guided them toward revealing what they already had observed, and toward expressing what they would like to know about seeds.

They wrote simple verses about seeds and with the help of the music teacher adapted these words to music. They also developed interpretative dances for mood music to portray rain, sunshine and wind. Through the use of many art media, and with the guidance of the art supervisor, they experienced many creative activities in both two and three dimensional work. They showed through their pictures and three dimensional objects the many things they had learned about seeds such as variety of size, color, texture, fruits, flowers, plants, and products.

As they continued to enjoy exploring the wonderful world of seeds they began to talk about ways they could share their experiences with other children. They decided they could present a story about seeds through dialogue, song and dance using the things they had written and created. This stimulating and enriching experience offered many opportunities for fundamental learning of basic skills and concepts through thinking, observing, reading, writing, feeling, doing, and sharing.

Use of Clay

An elementary school purchased a ceramic kiln and provided clay.[4] Soon it became evident that almost every child handled this material freely and with few inhibitions. As each class worked with the clay, teachers noted that all children became very involved in the process—even those children who often interfered with the work of other children or those who were usually not willing to work and share as a member of the group. It seemed that every child had found a medium through which he could express himself.

Good things seemed to happen to all the children as a result of their experience with clay and especially good effects were noted with some of the chil-

[3] Reported by Mrs. Jerry Franklin, Key West, Florida.

[4] Reported by Miss Jeanette Howard, Key West, Florida.

dren who had real adjustment problems. Several of the classroom teachers, with the assistance of the art supervisor, decided to find a way to give these children with adjustment problems further opportunity to explore the possibilities of clay.

Extending the school day for two afternoons each week seemed feasible. This allowed an afternoon for the children in the primary grades and one for the children in the intermediate grades. Teachers volunteered to come with the children from their room to provide the individual help each child needed. The groups consisted of 10 to 15 children. One child replaced another as the teacher felt a child was ready to leave the group. The services of the art supervisor were available for these afternoons and the children were given every opportunity to explore the possibilities of the material with which they were working.

In evaluating this extended experience in creativity the teachers and art supervisor believe the children grew in many ways—socially, mentally, physically and creatively through: (a) accepting responsibility and working independently; (b) experiencing creative thinking and problem solving; (c) developing coordination of muscle and mind; (d) learning to share—ideas, tools, material and space; (e) learning to care for and respect projects and material; and (f) learning the basic skills for working with the material.

Algebra

The teacher and students worked together in a first-year Algebra class [5] to provide a situation where each student had an opportunity to work according to his level of ability and achievement.

In beginning algebra, many topics were studied, each related to the other. As a different topic was introduced, for example, the solution of linear equations and their applications for use, the class worked together as one group. During this period the basic understandings and procedures were introduced. After several days many of the students were ready to proceed with more advanced work, while others needed more instruction in the basic understandings. At this point the class usually separated into two groups. Assignments were planned to take care of the needs of the groups. The work was planned so that one group could work independently as the teacher worked with the other group. The procedure of conducting the class varied. The groups were flexible and changed as different topics were studied. At the end of a period of time the class came together as a total group for evaluation.

The students welcomed this opportunity to work in these flexible groups. The more advanced students had an opportunity to engage in many enrichment activities, while the others could improve their understanding of the topic studied.

Each of these descriptions shows how a teacher has facilitated learning by planning and guiding activities related to acceptable educational goals.

At the present time good teachers are using time, space, materials and people in many different ways as they provide learning opportunities for young people. However, there may be still better ways than are now being used. We need continuing experimentation and projects designed to try new ideas in ways of providing learning situations of richness, balance, variety and continuity.

[5] Reported by Miss Laura Newell, Auburn, Alabama.

Pauline A. O'Melia

Plant Planning Affects Use of Instructional Materials

Closely related are plant planning and availability of instructional materials.

MATERIALS of instruction are usually regarded as second in importance only to teachers in the teaching-learning process. Improving facilities for the use of instructional materials becomes, then, a significant part of school planning and construction. Here, careful analysis of the problem and insightful planning in advance of construction can contribute as much toward the effective use of instructional materials as can a substantial increase in funds for capital outlay. In some instances, an actual saving of money may be effected, while the facilities are greatly improved. Basic to the success of this procedure is a cooperative and creative approach to the study of the ways instructional materials are used in classrooms and the ways in which they might be used to improve both teaching and learning. This essential planning is shared fully by teachers and administrators working closely with the architect's staff.

Within the individual classroom, an inventory of student and teacher use of various media will indicate some fundamental considerations in the planning of classrooms. Teachers and administrators should then participate in open discussion of ways in which they envision the use of instructional materials, regardless of any difficulties in present or past situations. Their ideas will give a basic list of suggestions for consideration for every classroom. A survey of developments in the field of communications may also indicate useful adaptations for the classroom. New inventions today may become commonplace during the life of the school plant. Later changes in a building are often so costly as to become prohibitive. Each suggestion, therefore, should be weighed carefully and discussed thoroughly.

A meeting involving students, teachers, administrators and parents that encourages "dreaming out loud" about classroom facilities can be rewarding. What is most wanted for the classroom laboratory by teachers may be something that has escaped administrative consideration, or seemed insignificant from that viewpoint, although the provision might be made easily, even economically. In such a meeting, one

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student pointed out how convenient it would be if lightweight carts, like those used in grocery stores, were available to move sets of encyclopedias from room to room. The actual implementation of this suggestion came in a form that facilitated the movement of many types of materials within the school, even though the final choice was slightly different from the original idea.

A Check List for the Classroom

Any school's list of desirable classroom facilities to promote better use of instructional materials should provide for the following:

1. *Adequate shelving for books that are kept in the classroom on both a temporary and a permanent basis.* If the shelving is deep, 12 inches in most instances, it can serve many purposes. The clearance between shelves should be a minimum of 10 inches for greatest usefulness. Wherever practicable, the overall height of classroom shelving should be 42 inches. This provides adequate space for three adjustable shelves and a counter at a useful height. Shelving should be equipped with metal stripping and clips to make convenient the adjusting of space between shelves.

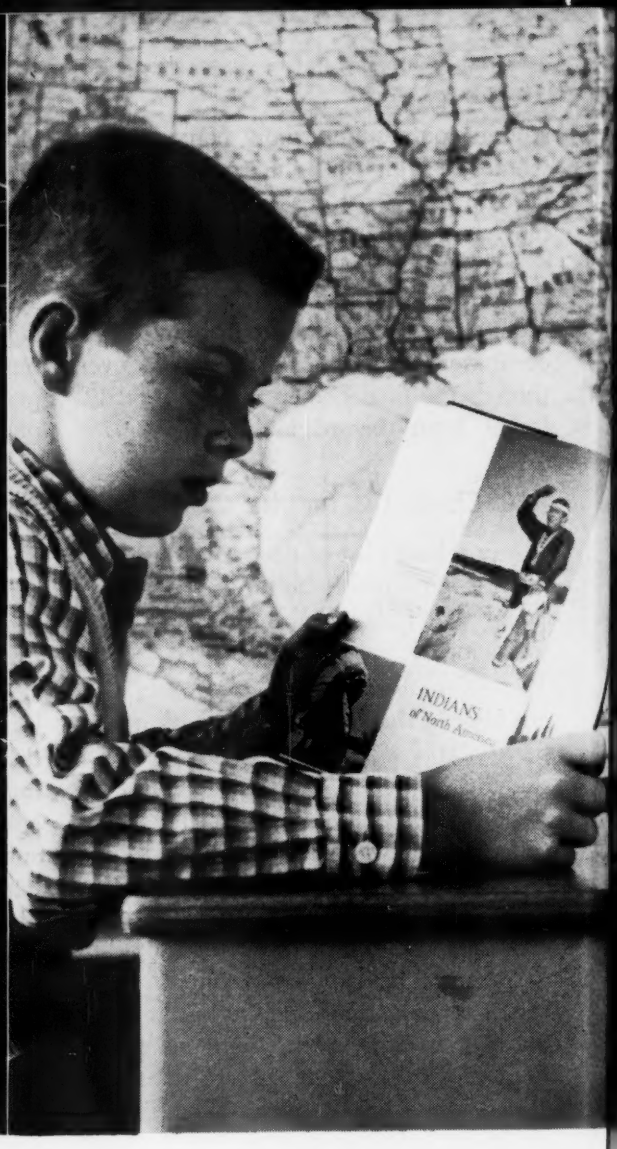
An inviting seating arrangement in a corner of the classroom makes reading for information, for relaxation or for the pure joy of escape a natural part of every student's day. Even crowded classrooms can usually find a place for two or three chairs chosen with the physical maturity of the students in mind. One Florida school succeeded in having a "reading corner" in every room throughout the year, despite a doubling of the student population during the tourist season. Sometimes the furniture was new, more often it was renewed by a cooperative P.T.A. committee, but always it was attractive and comfortable. One corner included two hassocks and a wicker rocker, another a small love seat, while a third even added decorative reading lamps to enhance the setting. A few current periodicals selected with care, some pamphlets related to a class project and placed on a low table can make this area an attention-getter for a roving eye and an added lure for the reluctant reader. Time for browsing here is important, too, but the facilities are of prime importance.

2. *Listening equipment that can be used without disturbing other students.* Time for listening-to-learn can usually be found by busy students as well as their teachers, if a record player or a tape recorder is a part of classroom equipment. This can be kept conveniently ready for use when a broad shelf with an electrical outlet is properly placed. Storage facilities for earphones close to the record player or tape recorder minimize the disturbance to other students when the listeners set up their equipment.

Similarly, radio facilities are installed so that the whole school may enjoy occasional programs, but a single classroom may tune in to a particular program if desirable. Whether radio is centrally controlled or whether individual receivers are supplied to classrooms, it is important that tuning in or out be managed within each classroom.

In this connection, thought should be given to the desirability of a school-wide intercommunication system that is supplemented by individual instruments in each area to provide privacy for teacher communication within the building. Such instruments encourage direct

(Continued on page 436)



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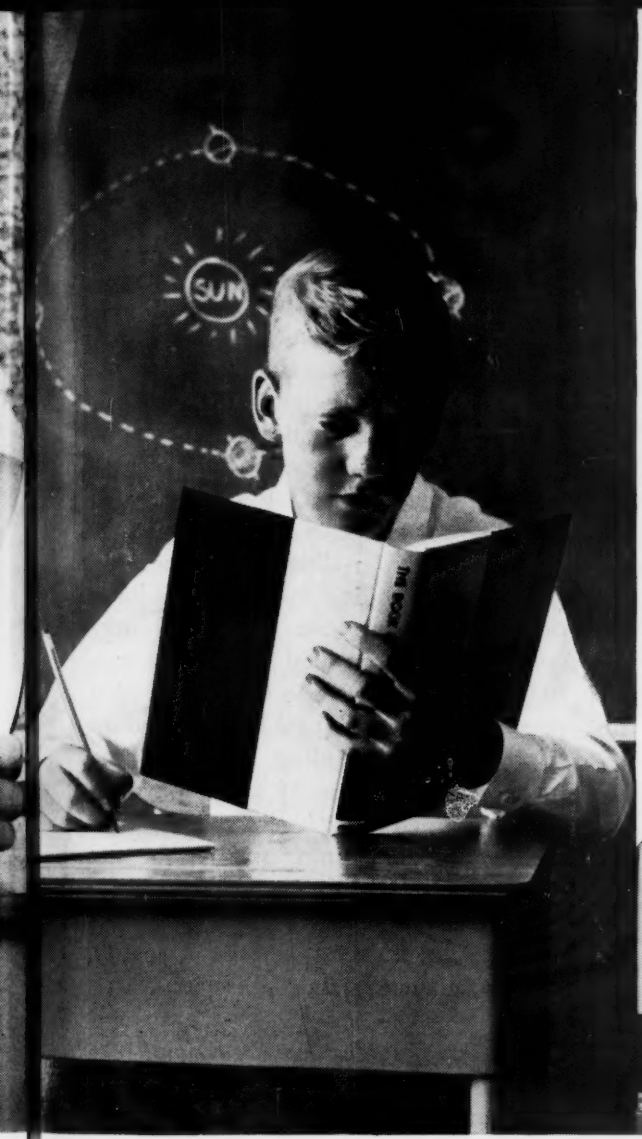

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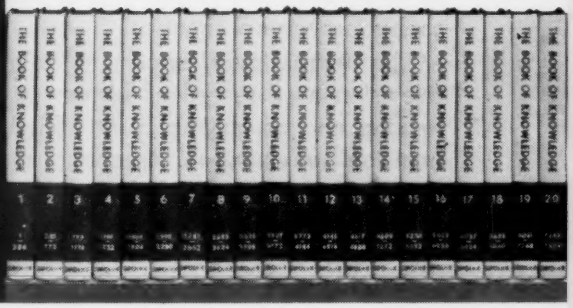

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(Continued from page 433)
calls to the centers involved when materials from several sources are needed for a class. The quick verification of a statement through a call to the school's information center or library, can often set a class discussion on a firmer footing so that an issue can more readily be discussed while interest is high.

3. *Facilities for individual and group viewing.* Just as filmstrips have long ago proved their value in classroom teaching, so they also have a role in the individual's plan for learning. Here again the generous provision and careful placing of electrical outlets can make the use of individual filmstrip viewers a natural, uncomplicated part of study and research. Such filmstrip viewers do not require a screen, can be operated very easily, and are inexpensive enough to make the provision of one or two for each class group practical.

The increasingly important role of television as a record of history in the making and as an important added dimension to classroom teaching underscores the importance of planning for the use of this medium in the classrooms being constructed today. Few screens are presently suitable for viewing by 25 or 30 persons. Therefore more thought should be given to the placement of two or more screens at a proper height and with adequate diffusion of light for comfortable viewing. Once the size of the group and the probable amount of use of television facilities are determined, both television and lighting engineers should be consulted for expert help in the selection, location, and manner of use of such equipment. Television facilities may be planned for only a certain percentage of the classrooms in a given building, but a decision as to this should result through well-informed discussions and with the advice of qualified consultants, not on the basis of individual enthusiasms or dislikes.

The use of television and of filmstrip viewing in successful and enriching learning situations has underscored the unique role of the educational film. Therefore, recent developments in research indicating potential revolutionary changes in the educational film industry may well affect classrooms within the next few years. One suggestion is that the projector may become a permanent installation, no longer prohibitively expensive for individual classroom location. The picture and the sound may conceivably be supplied on separate cartridges and slipped into their respective places without the problems attendant on threading, rewinding, etc. The time to consider provision of a suitable projection surface in each classroom is during the initial planning so that the developments of the future will be useful in the classroom built today. Should the inexpensive projector become a reality, there will then be fewer barriers to its extensive use.

4. *Adequate display areas and devices are important in utilizing instructional materials effectively.* It almost goes without saying that chalkboards and tackboards will be provided in every room in a school used for instructional purposes. Nevertheless, the all-important bulletin board is too often omitted, or its composition and placement are not carefully considered. Location should be a matter worked out in consultation with teachers; and composition should be an important contribution by the architect since new materials are being developed constantly. Pegboard has recently proved its value and adaptability for display of many types of exhibit materials. With a varied stock of accessories, the pegboard

can provide a hook or a useful shelf in a wide range of sizes. A panel or more of both pegboard and tackboard is essential in every classroom.

To facilitate the study of maps and large charts and the display of pictures, a functional metal strip at two or more predetermined heights is highly desirable for each classroom. The eye-level for viewing when seated and when standing suggests the proper height. Adjustable hooks and clamps to insert easily in such a "moulding" should be provided in ample variety and supply.

Whether or not the basic equipment here described is provided initially, it is of paramount importance to consider its probable use so that necessary wiring and wall-construction will not hinder the addition of any of this essential equipment at a later date.

Most of this discussion deals with the individual classroom. The suggestions, however, apply equally to all classrooms from kindergarten through high school. Little has been said about the storage of equipment or instructional materials in the classroom, because the ideal situation is, of course, a central location from which both the materials and the less frequently used pieces of equipment are readily available. Opaque projectors, powerful microscopes, extra individual filmstrip viewers, and replacements for temporarily disabled equipment should be centrally controlled and administered.

Instructional materials available to all students and teachers and circulated throughout the building are usually best handled through one area where the school's total resources are shown in a central index. To be functional, this is usually an alphabetically arranged card catalog. Here, in a generous sized laboratory-type center, recordings, books, periodicals, newspapers, slides, filmstrips, charts, maps and pictures are properly housed and readily available. Here faculty and students can come for immediate browsing, examination and comparison of resources before selecting those to be borrowed for further study and use. Loans can be made for both class and home use, to individuals and to groups, as the need dictates.

On the basis of the function it is to fill, this central resource begins to describe itself. It should be centrally located within the building, particularly in relation to the classroom area. It should be acoustically treated to an even greater degree than classrooms because of the increased amount of use it receives and the kinds of activities conducted in it. It needs shelving for books, allowing at least 10 volumes per student in the school's enrollment, with adequate consideration for the problems of oversize as well as conventional volumes. Shelving divided every 4 inches, 13 and 17 inches in height cares for recordings, while suitable cases accommodate filmstrips and slides. Legal size files in ample number provide for an active, up-to-date source of current information in clippings, pamphlets and pictures. Periodicals, both current and for a reasonable period of prior time are invitingly displayed, while easily accessible storage is available for significant periodicals over a five or ten year period as the curriculum of the school may suggest or need. Within the same central area, there are also appropriate storage facilities for maps, charts, posters and similar items.

To make provision for use of all the resources available in the school, the principles that applied to consideration of facilities for classroom use of instructional materials may need to be reviewed.

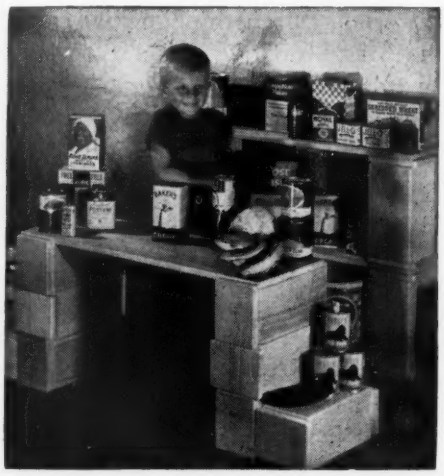
Here many comfortable chairs placed near bookshelves to invite reading and browsing are essential. Larger work surfaces where a variety of materials may be consulted, compared and studied at once, are provided by tables with matching chairs. The conventional table and chair arrangement characteristic of school libraries for 40 years has not proved its unique value. Observe carefully the relaxed positions assumed by absorbed readers in any situation.

Soundproof conference rooms should be provided to accommodate from six to eight persons for listening, for discussion. Control from a central point is made easy by the installation of glass partitions from a height of 42 inches to the ceiling. Adjacent should be a viewing room where film pre-views and discussion may take place with faculty or student groups.

A somewhat secluded area for a professional library, apart from the usual traffic pattern, will encourage faculty members to take advantage of a limited, but uninterrupted opportunity to scan current professional material. Lounge-type furniture here is especially desirable, while the whole materials center can be enhanced through the use of dividers. Planters and shelving can screen off the area designated for faculty collections.

Since, in an area of this size and function, wall space is of paramount importance, whenever possible window areas should be concentrated in blocks and the lower sash placed as high as feasible, preferably no lower than 42 inches to provide functional shelving beneath.

The suggestions given here only skim the surface of important considerations in planning for the improved use of instructional materials as a new building is being planned. The urgent need for involving teachers and others in the basic planning and in reviewing present practices before making final decisions cannot be too strongly emphasized. Out of such "thinking together" sessions will come the understandings that make for successful new schools. In each area of instruction, it goes almost without saying, the advice and counsel of experts should be sought. Formerly, few school administrators built even one new school in a professional lifetime. Now, too many administrators are plagued and harassed by building problems so numerous that scant attention can be paid to any detail. Nevertheless, the generations to come will have their education improved or handicapped by the urgent decisions being made under terrific pressure today. It is imperative to plan and construct with vision and insight.



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The Importance of People

Column Editor: Fred T. Wilhelms

Silk Purses Out of Raw Silk

"NOWADAYS, when I hear the term 'high standards,'" Howard Lane said recently, "I know it probably means *more systematic rejection.*"

And we do almost seem to be in a national campaign for exclusiveness. It comes to a head at the college level. Something less than joy shows on the citizen's face when he hears of huge college enrollments just around the corner. Plain dismay greets the probable budget. State institutions search for legal ways to narrow the entry gates—with most of their faculties applauding each new success. Private institutions, freer to do as they like, make such claims for the students they finally admit that sometimes their faculties and facilities look a little shabby by comparison.

The high schools and grade schools can't block out whole layers of the population, though, humanly enough, they sometimes sound as if they itch to. But they can manage an internal exclusiveness, in classes and activities and general school life, which pretty effectively saves the special goodies for the insiders.

Well, I'm not out to make all that look silly or nasty. It *is* a distressing thing at any level to have to teach the incompetent, the shiftless, and the hostile. We *do* have to ensure rich opportunity for those who use it especially well. And it *is* essential that colleges spend their resources on those who can and will do collegiate work.

Still, there are some questions: Like, will a policy of exclusiveness get us enough highly developed people? We tend to act as if it will, as if letting more youngsters finish high school or enter college is just a kindness to them. At the same time, we worry about shortages—of doctors, of teachers, of scientists, etc.—and there may be a wee contradiction there. When we look ahead we see a society and an economy even more complex, even more dependent on technology. And we usually say there will be still less need for the untrained and a still greater demand for college graduates.

It's a tricky business, this forecasting of manpower needs, and I can't pretend to have the answers. Yet I have a feeling in my bones that our society is going to miss becoming what it could be in just whatever degree we let potential ability go undeveloped. If that isn't true, if a narrow-gated educational policy will get us all the leaders and scholars and technicians we need, then maybe my concern is groundless. Maybe we can afford to be a little cavalier; maybe we should refuse to stoop to make silk purses out of anything that doesn't

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look nice and silky right from the start.

But suppose it turns out we need more silk purses than we get that way, what then? The old saying tells us we can't make them out of sows' ears. What can we use?

Let's look at the Russians. They may be more worth studying in this particular than in anything else they have done. When their great revolution was finished, they had wiped out the old aristocracy, shot much of the intelligentsia, and liquidated the small middle class. As they launched their massive program of education, nearly all they had to work with were children of an ignorant proletariat, or peasant boys and girls reared in mud huts by illiterates. To an orthodox schoolmaster they must have looked like a prize collection of sows' ears. But the event has proved that they weren't sows' ears at all; they were only silk in a raw, hard-to-recognize form. They must have been, for out of their ranks have come the scholars and the scientists and technicians who are challenging the Western World.

A Search for Silk

If I could qualify, I should like to be on the faculty of a college that deliberately and experimentally set out to discover and develop outstanding talent from among the unprepossessing. I realize that we are not so hard pressed as the Russians were, because for three centuries we have been bringing up into the middle and upper classes millions who, in less venturesome societies, would have ground out their lives in the lowest class. By doing so—and our schools have been among the prime movers—we have tremendously enriched our store of ready human resources.

Yet in that very act we have proved that we have only begun, that there is a vast added store of human richness waiting to be brought up. We need it—need it so badly that it is folly not to make the visionary try. Our problem is *not* to ease the looming tax burden by selecting more cautiously. Our problem is to find ways of investing ever more daringly; to invest in every kind of ability we need, searching it out wherever it may be. All experience has proved that the great investment will pay; bold bets on human beings always pay.

But let's get back to my new college: It will have extremely high standards; far higher than those of most of our universities where, despite all the talk, just reasonably able youngsters get along pretty well if they are socially and verbally developed. For we shall be seeking out the truly exceptional from a very large reservoir.

That search will constitute our first great problem. The ordinary ways of looking won't identify the young men and women we are after. In fact, the ones we want may look very bad through the eyes of a typical admissions officer. For instance, their English won't be very attractive, at least as to polish; and finish in English is an important college criterion—necessarily so, college being a wordy business. In addition to its real importance in intellectual matters, quality of expression tends to be a major symptom of a much larger syndrome of social factors. Thus it is hard for a college not to be blinded to real quality when speech and writing are poor. Perhaps we can learn to spot, underneath the crude sloppiness learned in rough homes and street corners, that naive strength and clarity which betoken a good mind.

The admissions officer looks, again necessarily, for intelligence. He may not

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see it in our students, for we know that the group-test I.Q.'s on their records are likely to be 15, 20, or even 30 points below their real ability (a difference big enough to make a bright lad look dull-average, or a genius just reasonably bright). Inevitably, the same sort of result is registered on the test of academic aptitude which the college itself probably uses. And so a second set of data adds to our inability to see real quality. Well administered individual tests would come closer to the real picture; and if we are serious about digging for genuine intelligence, we can find ways of assessing it—by inference from behavior in activities and on the job, for instance. But the assessment we need will never be so easy as the mass-administered half-hour.

Above all, the admissions officer looks for grades. For a whole congeries of reasons they may be pretty bad. And so, by just about every standard we college people commonly apply, the very boys and girls I am talking about may look wholly unacceptable. To find them will take a whole new way of seeing. Difficult; not impossible; I saw it being done in Pakistan's Village AID, where perceptive leaders were picking and mobilizing youth of giant potential from a peasantry ignorant beyond your most dismal imagining (while the regular schools and colleges droned on complacently). I saw them using, in tests and in interviews, open-ended questions closely related to the boys' own lives, the answers being rated not so much for correctness as for good sense and inventiveness and evidences of power. I saw them observing foot races and plowing, not for accomplished skill, but for what was revealed about the young person.

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But suppose we have found the ones we want. Our troubles have only begun. For the factors which caused these youngsters to look bad (and, in all truth, to perform badly) by school standards will still be operating. Can we offset those factors? Can we create an environment in which these young people will catch fire, so that four or five years from now they will stand up with the very best—so that, no matter how unorthodox our intermediate treatment, our final product will be no dilute compromise with quality?

It will take years of bold experimenting. Initially, one must make one's guesses, and bet on them. Let's look at just a couple of variables. We know that, compared to the middle and upper classes, the lower-class family lives more for the present; plans less, sacrifices less for the future. This is just one aspect of a value system which the children share. We can expect them to aim at present gratification; to be impatient about putting preparation in the bank toward some vague future.

How can we change this? The question is pivotal. For without a civilized flair for thinking ahead, nobody can invest himself in the grueling processes of disciplined thought. Can we build a program which yields a high measure of immediate satisfaction and at the same time, little by little, shifts the emphasis toward the future? I don't know the answer.

But I do have a hunch that one big reason for a lack of future-orientation is the lower-class youngster's pretty realistic appraisal that for him there isn't much future anyway. A middle-class youngster has real-life opportunities to see that people can move ahead. A slum youngster has a hard time believing it, because the image of life as he

has seen it includes only the long, dusty stretch at one level.

Years ago, when Burton studied sixth graders around Chicago's stockyards, he found that, typically, they had been only six blocks from home; and when he asked them to imagine the better part of Chicago, the highest they could go was to guess that it probably did not smell so! With TV and all, perhaps few are so isolated today; yet the low ceiling on the conception of life may not be atypical. Maybe the main reason a Russian slum boy in 1921 could release the energy to become a scholar was that suddenly life opened out before him. Things were going to be wonderful; everybody was talking about it.

A Value System

Well, improving the conception might not be too tough. Moving upward is always difficult, especially for minority groups, but try to think of a time or place when teachers could more truthfully have sold exceptional young people on the opportunities before them. A clever faculty, not too much shackled by orthodoxy, might be able to build a new picture of life's possibilities and goals.

With the help of home economics, the practical arts, and consumer education, the picture could be tough-minded and realistic, even as the goals moved upward. With a good bit of community exploration—maybe even travel—we could widen horizons. A year or so spent finding out how life is lived on planes of culture and dignity and grace could be a fine investment.

Of course, what we are really talking about here is building up a youngster's value system. On the record, colleges have not generally been very successful at this. But I believe a college could be if it really tried.

A more academic example of the difficulties we shall face can be taken from the field of English. It will be imperative that our youngsters learn to speak and read and write—but above all to think—in the language needed to communicate subtle and complex ideas with precision.

Obviously, there will be the problem of their bad previous habits. But this will vanish swiftly if we solve the problem of motivation. (A powerful mind learns language speedily if there is a drive to do so.) There will be a much worse problem of *meagerness*, the result of poor background. They will need desperately what the liberal arts—perhaps literature above all else—have to offer. Yet they will initially reject all this because they do not see its relevance. We must move with them to very high levels of thought and expression. Yet we shall have to root everything down in what is plainly relevant and functional —this will take creative teaching. But it will not be impossible, if we are willing to substitute a massive effort for the usual mechanical routine dab of "English A," and cut loose our truly creative language arts and literature teachers to use unorthodox content and method.

There will be many other problems. Perhaps the nicest of them all will be to build a campus environment which lets the unpolished feel comfortable enough to be themselves—and yet subtly challenges them to change.

It's of no use for me to try to tell how they will be solved—for nobody knows as yet. The main thing is to *try*. As we make the try we need to enlist the help of the very best social and behavioral scientists. Psychologists can help us to

(Continued on page 458)

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Curriculum News

Column Editor: Paul R. Klohr
Contributor: Alexander Frazier

THE current issue of the *Newsletter* of the Laboratory School Administrators Association (January 1960) reports on a variety of studies being conducted by member schools. An increase in experimentation seems to be a trend in these schools, editor Robert Ohm of the University of Chicago Laboratory School notes, although he calls attention to the absence of projects specifically in the field of teacher education. "A large area of unexplored territory exists between the right idea or significant conclusion and its eventual incorporation into improved practice," Ohm points out, suggesting that how to bring practice and present knowledge together is "the proper domain" of the laboratory school.

Actually the range of study projects reported by the schools is very broad, going much beyond a reliance on the older demonstration function. For example, the P. K. Yonge Laboratory School, University of Florida, Gainesville, reports that Arthur Combs and Dan Soper have been granted $40,000 by the Office of Education for the beginning phase of what presumably could become a long-term longitudinal study of children's self concepts. As reported in the *Newsletter*, this project will explore the following questions: "(a) What is the relationship of a child's perceptions of self and of his world to his current behavior and achievement in school? (b) Are changing perceptions of self and the world accompanied by changes in behavior and achievement? (c) Can behavior and achievement be predicted from a knowledge of the child's perceptions of self and his world?" Here the significance of the problem is such that, given continued support and the maintenance of the present leadership, the outcome might well be as widely valuable as Olson's work at the University of Michigan laboratory school.

Similarly, another major area of exploration has been brilliantly defined at the University Elementary School, University of Minnesota, under the guidance of Paul Torrance of the Bureau of Educational Research. While much of the information about this project is being circulated through an exchange of fugitive mimeographed materials, what can be learned of its progress thus far would indicate that here is another example of a highly productive alliance between a laboratory school and an imaginative research specialist.

At the University of Illinois, two projects may be of particular interest. J. J. Gallagher and M. J. Aschner are the principal investigators in a study of the creative and analytic thinking of gifted children, which will attempt "to develop a classification system for the purpose of analyzing classroom verbal performance and to compare the performance of gifted children in the classroom with tests attempting to measure elements of creative thought." The arithmetic proj-

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ect under the direction of David A. Page is already widely reported. Here the effort is to develop a new curriculum in elementary school mathematics together with ways to transmit the curriculum to other schools. Teachers from public schools as well as consultants from the University are involved in the project.

The new Center for School Experimentation at The Ohio State University is also attempting to involve public school systems in cooperative research undertakings. At present, it is developing such relationships for an exploration of problems of individualized reading in the primary grades, for a re-thinking of the nature of primary social studies, for a review of the adequacy of the junior high school program. At University School, which forms the base of the new Center, other studies include investigations of individual-group values, differences in boy-girl adjustment to school, and the development of an integrated four-year high school science program.

Because of their access to campus resources, laboratory schools seem likely to become increasingly active in basic research as well as in experimental program development.

THE initial appearance of another *Newsletter* also brings information about research developments that should be of wide interest to ASCDers. Put out by the Cooperative Research Program of the Office of Education, the bulletin will be published several times a year. The first issue reviews the history of the program, which has granted $10,571,610 to 234 projects since it began in 1956, not including 18 projects acted on in November 1959.

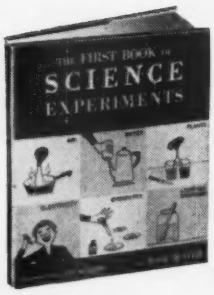
As compared with its earlier rather precise definition of areas of research interest, the present basis of support is announced as follows: "The Cooperative Research Program is authorized to support research on a wide variety of problems related to education. Research proposals are invited from subject-matter specialists, psychologists, sociologists, and all others working in the field of education and the behavioral sciences." It may be worth noting also that the first of four criteria listed for use in evaluating research proposals is "significance of the problem for education."

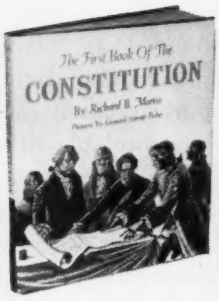
Plans are under way to issue a series of monographs based primarily on research sponsored by the program. Available at this time is a document prepared at the request of the Office of Education by Daniel E. Griffiths of Teachers College entitled *Research in Educational Administration: An Appraisal and a Plan.* Copies may be obtained from the Cooperative Research Branch without charge.

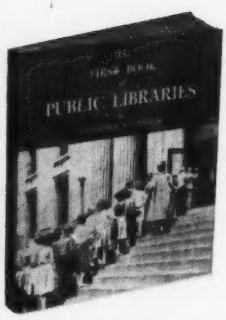
NEW studies inaugurated by the Horace Mann-Lincoln Institute for School Experimentation, according to its 1959-1960 bulletin, include an exploration of considerations basic to the design of the curriculum, to be conducted by A. W. Foshay; a study designed to determine how best to cultivate empathic qualities, by Mark Flapan; and a study to be directed by Florence Stratemeyer on preparing teachers for modern schools.

OF possible interest to persons collecting *curiosa* from this period of free-for-all curriculum research is a workbook by Newton Hawley and Patrick Suppes, of Stanford University, entitled *Geometry for Primary Grades: Book I.*

—ALEXANDER FRAZIER, *director, Center for School Experimentation, The Ohio State University, Columbus.*







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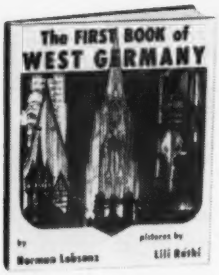

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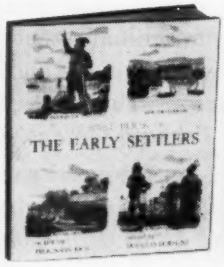

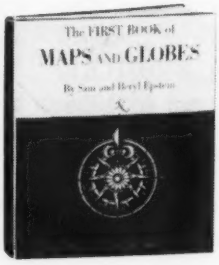

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Curriculum Research

Column Editor: Walter B. Waetjen
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Robert S. Soar

Human Relations Training for Teachers

ALTHOUGH there is some agreement that skills in human relations are crucial needs for educators, there is little agreement regarding how these skills are learned, improved and maintained by classroom teachers. One way to learn such skills has been suggested and promoted by the summer institutes at Bethel, Maine, organized by the National Training Laboratory. The work of this laboratory is well known and its worth to ASCD has been demonstrated in such instances as the "First Cooperative Curriculum Research Institute."[1] One research program has introduced human relations training for school administrators in an attempt to improve current educational practices. However, evaluative studies regarding the worth of laboratory training in human relations to the classroom teacher have not yet been completed.[2]

Such is our task. Involving some 60 elementary classroom teachers of the Nashville City and Davidson County school systems, an effort is being made to evaluate the effectiveness of laboratory training in human relations.[3] These teachers have been divided into two groups: an experimental group and a control group. The experimental group, subdivided into two sections numbering 12 and 13 teachers respectively, participated in separate three-week workshops that were patterned after those of the National Training Laboratory. The remaining 35 teachers form a control group that will make possible comparisons regarding the worth of this kind of training. All of these teachers have cooperated in supplying extensive attitude, personality and biographical data. They have permitted extensive observations of their classrooms, and they have maintained a comprehensive diary of their classroom activities. Specifically, all these data include:

1. *Attitude and personality data*—Purporting to inventory respectively attitudes towards pupils, towards teaching, and personality factors, all teachers were asked to complete the *Minnesota Teacher Attitude Inventory*, the *Teacher Opinion*

[1] See: Stuart Chase, *The Bethel Story*. Washington, D. C.: National Training Laboratory in Group Development, 1957; and Matthew B. Miles and Stephen Corey, "The First Cooperative Curriculum Research Institute," in *Research for Curriculum Improvement*, 1957 Yearbook, Washington, D. C.: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development, a department of the National Education Association, 1957.

[2] Vynce A. Hines and Hulda Grobman. "What Makes a Good Principal." *Bulletin of the National Association of Secondary-School Principals* 40: 5-16, November 1956.

[3] This research is supported by the Cooperative Research Program, U. S. Department of Health, Education, and Welfare, Contract SAE 8143.

Inventory, the *Survey of Educational Leadership Practices*, and the *Minnesota Multiphasic Inventory*.

2. *Biographical data*—A biographical history blank was constructed and administered that asked a variety of questions dealing with a teacher's preparation and experience in teaching, participation in community and professional activities, job opportunities and preferences, and open-ended questions related to situational job satisfaction.

3. *Classroom observations*—Utilizing two relatively new techniques, the teacher's classroom was assessed with respect to social-emotional climate and the ability of pupils to work together in groups. Social-emotional climate in the classroom was assessed by use of the *Observation Schedule and Record (OSCAR)*,[4] a behavioral rating card that inventories what children are actually doing in a classroom at a given time, what the teacher is doing, and the extent and patterns of communication maintained between teachers and pupils. The ability of the pupils to plan and carry out a series of group tasks was assessed by means of the *Russell Sage Social Relations Test*.[5] This is a performance test developed to measure achievement of those objectives of education related to working together in groups that were developed at the President's Mid-Century Conference on Objectives of Education.[6]

[4] Donald M. Medley and Harold E. Mitzel. "A Technique for Measuring Classroom Behavior." *Journal of Educational Psychology*, in press.

[5] Dora E. Damrin. "The Russell Sage Social Relations Test: A Technique for Measuring the Group Problem Solving Skills in Elementary School Children." *Journal of Experimental Education* 28: 85-99, September 1959.

[6] Nolan C. Kearney. *Elementary School Objectives*. New York: Russell Sage Foundation, 1953.

4. *Diary of classroom activities*—Finally, all teachers kept a log of their own group activities during a one-week period. This was requested to supply some insight into the nature and frequency of group activities used by the classroom teachers, and offered anecdotal material dealing with the teacher's perceptions of his classroom activities.

All measurements will be obtained twice from each teacher of both the experimental and control groups. The first collection of data took place prior to the training sessions, during the early part of the spring semester, 1959. The training sessions were then held during the summer of 1959. A calendar year after the first data were collected, the follow-up materials will be distributed and completed, and all the classroom observations repeated. Analyses of these data will make comparisons of change at different levels: the social-emotional climate of the classroom, the pupils' and teachers' classroom behavior, and the teachers' attitudes, and self-descriptions. If the changes are significantly greater among the teachers who had the laboratory training in human relations, as compared with the teachers who did not have the training, evidence is available regarding the worth of the laboratory training.

Additionally, this study should cast some light on a variety of other issues. For instance, can laboratory training in human relations change the teacher-pupil relationship? Do teachers, in fact, change attitudes and behavior as a result of a three-week workshop in which there are many opportunities to develop understandings, skills, and practices in human relations? What effects on the pupils result from the teachers' increased knowledge about human relations? Although the data are far from complete,

it is not too early to report some of the findings that are already apparent. These include:

1. The variation between teachers and pupils in human relations skills in the classroom appears at least as great as the variation in pupil achievement in the commonly appraised subject areas. Human relations skills represent one of the traits on which individual differences are as great as any of the other skill areas.

2. Human relations in the classroom are centrally dependent on the characteristics and skills of the individual teacher. Variation between teachers within the same school is almost as great as the variation between teachers in different schools in this respect. It is surprising that some teachers who seem to maintain the best human relations do so in a classroom next door to teachers who maintain the least satisfactory human relations.

3. Use of group activities in the classroom that involves a pupil-teacher affective relationship requires particular personality and attitude characteristics of teachers. Age and teaching experience appear more important as factors in human relations than do the amount or kind of academic training a person has received.

4. The conclusion of others that the social-emotional climate of a classroom may be assessed in a reliable fashion by trained observers utilizing standardized procedures is reinforced by this study. This finding may well suggest that at most the problem of measuring teacher effectiveness may be close to solution. At the least, it suggests that observers working with elementary school teachers in widely different geo-

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graphical locations and with schools having widely variant populations can utilize the same measuring instrument to obtain an index of teacher effectiveness.

5. Laboratory training in human relations need not be carried out in a geographically remote location. Some concern has been voiced regarding the need for a cultural island in which to conduct this training. However, an analysis of reactions to training of these teachers who lived at home indicates feasibility of instituting training during regular collegiate summer sessions.

6. The performance of children on the *Russell Sage Social Relations Test* represents a reliable performance measure of skill in planning and executing a problem of working together in groups. Availability of a measure such as the *Russell Sage Social Relations Test* should encourage research and further investigations into why some teachers are better able to teach such skills to their children than are other teachers.

7. Teachers differ in the degree of profit gained from the laboratory, ranging from those who are largely confused and mystified by it, to numbers who discover new, exciting, and hitherto unexpected vistas offering almost unlimited promise. Preliminary analysis indicates considerable success in predicting the relative degree of learning different teachers are likely to achieve in such a workshop.

8. Finally, and perhaps most important, teachers who experienced the laboratory in human relations are finding their work as teachers somewhat easier, more relaxing, and more satisfying than previously. A considerable proportion of teachers indicate in self-reports that such training is helpful in their work. As a specific example of a newly developed group responsibility, a number of the teachers report being able to leave their classrooms indefinitely without occurrence of disorderly conduct by pupils.

In summary, then, this study is felt to represent a forward step on several fronts:

(a) In the measurement of teacher effectiveness in the areas of social-emotional climate of the classroom and the social skills of the children.

(b) In the application of a method of learning which is expected to upgrade those teacher skills, and

(c) In predicting which teachers have the personal resources rendering them likely to profit most from this sort of learning experience.

In the future, application of these results appears feasible at a number of levels. At one level, it might be desirable to introduce laboratory training in human relations to appropriately selected future teachers during their college years. Concurrently, at another level, those educators who are interested in curriculum change in their school systems might wish to start such programs by fostering teacher learning of human relations skills. Finally, the effectiveness of professional meetings and work and planning for groups of various sizes might be improved by the use of the techniques and methods perfected by laboratory training in human relations. The many applications of this kind of training to the educational world are almost endless and should result in better schools for a more truly democratic society.

—NORMAN D. BOWERS, *director, Fifth Year Program, University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill; and* ROBERT S. SOAR, *associate professor of psychology, Vanderbilt University, Nashville, Tennessee.*

Curriculum Bulletins

Column Editor: Arthur Hoppe

NOTE: The column editor was assisted this month by several colleagues at Indiana University who appraised materials in their respective fields: Leo Fay in reading, Robert Richey in air age education, Ingrid Strom in language arts, and Prevo Whitaker in science.

Evansville School Corporation. *Guide for Language Arts in the Secondary School: Remedial Reading and Developmental Reading.* Evansville, Indiana: the School Corporation, 1959. Approximately 80 p. (No price indicated.)

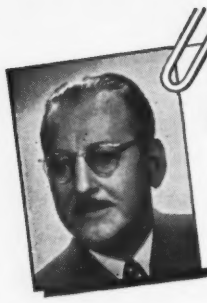
Final writing of this guide was the work of a relatively small committee, but the elaborate study and preparation that went before was the combined cooperative effort of all the teachers of language arts in the secondary schools of Evansville. Administrators, supervisors and teachers worked together in numerous committees and workshops. This effort was capped by a two-week workshop involving 115 members representing all grade levels and all aspects of the language arts. Thus, the procedure used in developing this bulletin apparently has resulted in its full acceptance by Evansville teachers.

Potential users need to pay close attention to the subtitles, for the guide is primarily concerned with remedial reading and a language arts program for poor readers. Seven units for English I-A and II-A consider such topics as diagnosis of reading difficulties, studying phonics, improving comprehension, reading rate and grammar. Six units for English IV-A stress reading for understanding, enjoyment, and appreciation. The course guide for developmental reading presents five units. Library instruction for grades 9-12 is outlined, as well as composition and usage appropriate for grades 6-10 inclusive. It is assumed that the latter materials should have been mastered reasonably well by students beginning their junior year in high school. Finally, a reading list, carefully graded (9-12), appears at the end of the guide.

That the bulletin is to be considered flexible and subject to change is evident from several explicit statements and from the generous allowance of space for criticisms and suggestions for improvement in every section of the guide. Decidedly superior to most guides in over-all quality, this bulletin should be extremely useful for teachers working with immature readers in the secondary school.

Houston Public Schools. *Advanced Chemistry, Course of Study.* Houston, Texas: the Schools, Summer 1958. 22 p. (25 cents)

This is a brief bulletin prepared by Marcille Hollingsworth for use by teachers who plan to develop an advanced course in chemistry. It indicates how advanced content is related to that of general chemistry and how it may be



A LETTER from John Rowe

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Sincerely,

John R Rowe

John R. Rowe
Educational Director

expanded. The course presumes a background including the beginning courses in chemistry, physics and mathematics; it presents materials and activities for a wide range of individual differences and a fine challenge for pupils talented in science. It is a valuable contribution in an area in which curriculum materials are somewhat scarce.

Houston Public Schools. *Advanced Physics, Course of Study.* Houston, Texas: the Schools, Fall 1958. 27 p. (30 cents)

This, too, is a brief bulletin prepared by Ernest R. Baker for use with carefully selected advanced students. Suggested prerequisites include "B" or better grades in Physics I and II, completion of Chemistry I and Trigonometry, recommendations by two previous math and science teachers and final selection by the teacher of the course.

The course of study is very well organized, contains bibliographic materials, references to laboratory experiments, specific content, and teaching suggestions—all of high quality. In the area of advanced work in science, this bulletin gives very substantial assistance.

Minneapolis Public Schools. *A Guide to the Teaching of Reading, Listening, Viewing, Grades 7-12.* Minneapolis: the Board of Education, 1959. 75 p. (Price not indicated.)

Here is a guide for which superlatives might be used without fear of exaggeration. It is a scholarly work which agrees quite uniformly with recommendations of the research studies in the English language arts. The background of this bulletin includes six years of preparation, two experimental editions, and contributions from such authorities as Bernice Leary, Dora V. Smith, Donald E. Bird and Edgar Dale.

The guide begins with a statement of 10 objectives of education adopted by the Minneapolis schools. This is followed by an introductory chapter which underscores the importance of receiving ideas through reading, listening, and viewing, and emphasizes such concepts as: (a) all teachers share responsibilities in these matters, (b) wide differences in ability are to be expected among pupils, (c) such differences require differentiated assignments and materials, and (d) the teaching of these skills and related attitudes should be integrated with teaching the various subject fields in secondary school.

The separate chapters on reading, listening and viewing follow the same general outline. Each begins with what the student should know in terms of basic concepts, desirable attitudes, and skills of the competent person. This is followed by special implications for the content fields, and then by planned learning experiences emphasizing the particular skill and including numerous brief reports of illustrative activities. Elaborate bibliographic materials conclude each section.

A few special items are unique for each skill. For viewing, there is a section on instructional film research.

For listening, extra attention is paid to judging the effectiveness of a speaker, listening critically and responding imaginatively. The chapter on reading has separate divisions on the developmental reading program, pupils with reading problems, and reading for personal satisfaction.

Although the guide is devoid of illustration, paper of different color is used for each chapter and the general format is pleasing. The material is very well organized and would be enormously useful to beginners or veterans among teachers of all sorts who may be interested in

furthering the communication arts in secondary school.

Syracuse, New York, City School District. *Aviation Units for the Primary Grades,* (and) *Aviation Units for the Intermediate Grades.* Washington 6, D. C.: National Aviation Education Council, 1025 Connecticut Avenue, N. W., January 1959. 29 and 31 p. respectively. (50¢ each.)

These two sets of units, including one for each grade, were developed by classroom teachers in Syracuse and used for more than three semesters. The National Aviation Education Council valued them so highly that it secured permission to duplicate and distribute the units widely. Various service clubs in the City of Syracuse assisted the project by providing scholarship aid to staff members who attended the Aviation Education Workshops at the Plattsburgh State University Teachers College, where the production of the units was accomplished.

As we enter the Space Age, the interest of youngsters, indeed, their *need* to know and understand basic concepts of aviation is undeniably urgent. The relevancy of such units as these in the modern curriculum is easily established.

Designed as a problems approach, each unit contains background knowledge and fundamental principles, activities for pursuing the problems, materials and resources needed, and many references which are keyed to the elaborate bibliography at the end of each guide. Although the units make their major contribution in the area of science, they include specific suggestions for correlation with all the major subject fields in the elementary school program.

—ARTHUR HOPPE, *associate professor of education, Indiana University, Bloomington.*

People

(Continued from page 445)

understand motivational blocks—largely at the unconscious level—and what to do about them. Sociologists and cultural anthropologists can help us to understand backgrounds of mores and ideals, so that we can blend our work comfortably against theirs. But above all, we'll need to try and fail and adapt and try again.

I guess you see, don't you, that I'm not really talking about a few special institutions—though I do think an experimental college would be worth a great deal. The problem in all institutions *and at all levels* is to learn to identify ability —no matter how it is hidden; and then to create an environment in which youngsters from many sorts of backgrounds can feel at home, get psychologically involved, and start the big push. Even small, half-intentional experience has already shown that campus environment can make a great difference; the downtown city colleges "pick up" thousands who would squirm in rednecked embarrassment on the kind of campus the movies portray.

And the secret of it all is that we need to do only a tiny bit of the whole job. Get an able youngster just a start —a little taste of success—a toe in the door; and you release a vigor and energy that can't be stopped. He will do the rest. Those ignorant village boys picked by Pakistan's Village AID get only a year's training—a year of good food, civilized life, contact with ideas—and they are going out from there to change the face of their nation.

—FRED T. WILHELMS, *professor of education, San Francisco State College, California.*

Letters to the Editor

Contributors:
Rachel Bodoh and
John Sternig

European vs. American Education

Hibbing, Minnesota
December 17, 1959

Editor
Educational Leadership

Dear Sir:

The past five years have probably produced more references to the relative merits of European education vs. American than the previous 50. Unfortunately, what we see in print, and hear via public speeches, radio and television, is contradictory, even highly controversial. Most American administrators who are eager to visit their European counterparts and see representative schools, do not have such a privilege, since their jobs prevent them from being away during the winter when schools are in session. A lucky 20, however, had such an experience last winter when they were selected to participate in the first Fulbright Seminar in Comparative Education. As a member of the group, my enthusiasm ran high, for now (I thought) I would be able to see at firsthand how other countries deal with their problems, perhaps gain new insights into solving some of our own and learn at last the *real* truth about European education.

It was a naive assumption. True, I saw a lot and did get many impressions. But a more sophisticated outlook would have prepared me for reality: the 20 who made up our group saw the same events in 20 different lights. I was often surprised in our "bull sessions" at other group members' interpretation of common experiences, and have been even more surprised at what I have seen in print since our return. And so the fable of the three blind men and the elephant seems more apropos than ever!

In fact, it is only after firmly establishing the point that anything I say is only one person's opinion that I am willing to discuss my views of the Seminar. Seven weeks spent in three countries did not produce an expert!

I thoroughly enjoyed Arthur Foshay's recent article (October 1959) on the changes that are being made in French education. I must admit, though, that I do not share his optimism about the speed with which those changes will be made.

It is true that the French have recently extended their compulsory education law to age 16; but it is also true that this extension does not become effective until this year's entering first graders *become* 16. It is also true that exciting things are happening at the experimental school at Sèvrès and at some of the experimental classes in the Provinces. However, my own feeling was that Sèvrès flourished as a monument to

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Madame Hatinguais, its founder, at least in part because she had the status of Inspector General; can someone *without* similar status in the centralized organization of France be similarly successful in maintaining the school and extending its influence? I thought her to be the most remarkable person we met in France, and I sincerely hope she lives a long, long time!

It is also true that the national "leaving examination" has been discontinued at the end of the primary school. However, the French officials who met with us at the Sorbonne at the end of two weeks in Paris were unhappy with this change, and hoped to restore the examination. At a meeting of French education leaders, headed by M. Jacob, Inspector General of the Academie of Paris, the statement, "Forty percent of those who enter secondary schools are ill prepared," sounded very much like home! Unlike Dr. Foshay, I feel that it will take years to make much of a dent in the system that was established by Napoleon.

Belgium, on the other hand, while still having a centralized organization was actively engaged *at the top level* in educational change. Much was heard about "active" methods and "self-government," a term for which there seems to be no equivalent in either French or Flemish, since the English term was used in the educational literature of both languages. It was interesting to me, however, that "democratizing" education was coming from the top down, as a decree!

In Holland there were evidences on all sides of change in emphasis. The Dutch have a great many concerns and are industriously seeking answers to their educational problems. One of their concerns is the high mortality rate in education. Only about half of their children go on to *any* form of secondary education.

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When asked what happens to the other half, the answer was, "They just get lost. Nobody knows."

This, of course, is an overstatement. They *do* go into the labor market but their formal education for the most part ceases, albeit there are extensive night school offerings at vocational schools. Some Dutch educators are taking a long look at our comprehensive high school as a means of salvaging some of this loss.

The Dutch are also concerned with the rigor of their classical high schools. They estimate that an IQ of 120 is required for entrance; of the ten percent of the teenage population who enter, only about five percent finally graduate. A modern language teacher in Haarlem made the statement, "The most refined torture system yet invented by civilized man is the Dutch High School!"

At a final summary session with the Dutch educators we had met, one who had spent some time in our country said, "The constant fear of the Dutch teenager is that he will not be intelligent enough; the constant fear of the American teen-ager is that he will not be popular enough!"

To me, the most interesting facet of Dutch education was the change in emphasis on teaching methods. They are intensely interested in methods that will give children training in *how to think*.

Dalton and Montessori schools, with children working on some type of contract plan are very popular. We were told that World War II was responsible for this change. During the Occupation it was discovered that the best educated people in many instances were the first to cooperate with the Germans. As the Dutch looked critically at this phenomenon, they decided that they were doing too good a job of training their children to follow directions! They needed to devise an educational method that would produce more self-reliant and critically minded students. But since examinations are omnipresent, many feel there is still too much emphasis on acquisition of facts at the expense of the interpretation of those facts.

Impressions

How can all these impressions be distilled into ideas applicable for our schools? Again, the conclusions are subjective, but here they are:

1. There may be a danger in making the teacher *too* secure. Is there perhaps a ratio between security and creativity? It is almost impossible for a *teacher* to inject any new idea into the French system. Is there a *real* advantage in being a civil servant?

2. The plan we saw in operation in Paris of sending a whole class to the mountains for a month of skiing and other outdoor activity along with regular class instruction seemed to be a delightful one. If we were willing, as the French are, to spend ten percent of our national income for education, we could finance such ventures in our crowded cities.

3. University education in France costs very little. We have not done so well in our country in making higher education available to those of limited means.

4. Our teacher shortage could be decreased by adopting a plan we saw in action at teacher training institutions in France whereby the teachers in training were subsidized by the government in exchange for spending six years in the teaching profession.

5. While emphasis on languages such as we saw in Holland is not as yet the vocational necessity with us that it is

with the Dutch, it is certainly essential to the improvement of international understanding and we would do well in this country to extend our foreign language offerings.

6. The idea that keeps plaguing me, however, is the difference in interpretation of the term "leadership" in western Europe and the United States. We often were told, when discussing the difference in aims of education, that their aim was to give a classical education (with all that it entails) only to the most able students so that they might become "leaders" of their country. Unfortunately, we are getting more and more public pressure in this country for just this type of education. I fervently hope and believe that we shall always be committed in this country to education for *all* children, the followers as well as the leaders. There is a story applicable here about an old goat who was trained in the Chicago stockyards to lead the cattle up to slaughter. Just before entering the slaughter house, a side door would open for him, and he would go back for another group. Outsiders called him "Judas" but the workmen in the stockyards called him "Leader."

The European Seminar has forced me to re-examine my concept of leadership in education and to do some soul-searching of my own into my concept of the function of education. Any system of education in any country is of necessity a reflection of the basic culture, the important beliefs of its people. There are features of all the systems we visited which would, indeed, enhance our own. But would any American steeped in democratic traditions want to change our basic cultural pattern to conform to that of our European neighbors?

Sincerely,

Rachel Bodoh
Director, Elementary Education
Independent School District No. 701
Hibbing, Minnesota

Comment on a Review

Glencoe, Illinois
January 26, 1960

Editor, *Educational Leadership*
Dear Sir:

I am writing to you because of a book review which was carried in the November 1959 issue of the Journal. The book is Philo Pritzkau's *Dynamics of Curriculum Improvement*, Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1959.

We bought the book for our Glencoe Professional Library when it first came out and I sent Dr. Pritzkau a comment about it. I was favorably impressed with it and was interested to see that your reviewer approached it from quite a different point of view than I and therefore reached somewhat different conclusions.

Perhaps you might be interested in my reactions to the book though they too are not necessarily a final judgment. Professional books strike readers differently, depending on the backgrounds and experiences which are brought to them and what they look for.

To me the book was novel in its ap-

proach. It deals with dynamics rather than mechanics or statistics. I warmed up to its significant handling of the inner values which are the soul of the curriculum in action. In my opinion the author used a fresh, creative approach in developing an organization which deals with basic ideas without becoming mired down in details. It gives the reader credit for bringing something to the book before he takes it up and yet keeps him comfortable by permitting him to "act within his limitations," as one section puts it. For me the book was new and different for the very reasons your reviewer found it lacking. No doubt both viewpoints can be justified and this is why I am writing to present mine.

Sincerely,
John Sternig
Public Schools
Glencoe, Illinois

Space

(Continued from page 419)

the wainscoting could be used as attractive teaching spaces. Similar space on the walls of the cafeteria, auditorium, and other parts of the building could be used as teaching space. In Central Elementary School in Albemarle, North Carolina, each room assumes responsibility for a section of the wall in the cafeteria for a display of art which serves not only as a teaching area but also does much to enhance the beauty and livability of the cafeteria. Both teachers and children take pride in the art exhibits. Also, hanging in the halls are picture frames for the children's art work which is changed periodically. Beautiful art work done by the children adds much to a school building.

The Task Ahead

As we look at the task ahead in education, the problem of space utilization will not be lessened. Instead, with our increasing enrollment, more teachers must strive to find better ways of using present space. As we see how some creative teachers are improving their classrooms, it should inspire others to experiment and discover new ways of their own. Only through boldness and persistence on the part of school personnel will the quality of education continue to improve. It is the hope of all, especially the parents, that the challenge will be met in the most effective way possible.

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Significant Books

Column Editor:
Elizabeth Z. Howard

Contributor:
Marie Kupres

Children's Views of Themselves. ***Ira J. Gordon.*** *36 p. 75¢.*

How Good Is Our Kindergarten? ***Lorraine Sherer and Special Committee on Kindergarten.*** *35 p. 75¢.*

Equipment and Supplies: Tested and Approved for Pre-School, School, Home. ***Committee on Equipment and Supplies.*** *93 p. $1.50. Washington, D. C.: Association for Childhood Education International, 3615 Wisconsin Avenue, N.W., 1959.*

Readers of *Educational Leadership* need no introduction to pamphlets prepared by ACEI. For many years these pamphlets have helped teachers and parents, and the appearance of new titles on the list is eagerly anticipated. Just at the close of 1959 three new ones appeared. These three differ quite markedly from one another in every way except in the high quality level which users of ACEI materials have learned to expect.

Children's Views of Themselves follows the familiar procedure of using many examples of real children in introducing the subject. This is followed by a scholarly (yet most readable) discussion of the way in which children form their self-concepts. The third chapter suggests ways in which adults can estimate children's self-concepts: "Behavior can be viewed as language. It is a way a child has of telling us what's on his mind, what is important to him and what's bothering him" (p.17). Finally, the pamphlet concludes with some things that adults can do in dealing with children appropriately, with regard for the self-concepts which children reveal to us. This final chapter should be a helpful one for teachers, even though it does not use the "cookbook" approach, or the tendency to apply recipes. Instead, it emphasizes the teacher's own self-understanding, the need for realistic expectations and opportunities for creativity, and the function of "discipline" in the total classroom situation.

In these days of great pressure to improve education, to raise the standards and quality of achievement, and to do creative jobs in school, we need books of this kind to strengthen our insights into the learners. We are convinced, many of us, that the way a child views both himself and his world determines in large measure the interpretations he will place on his experiences. We must, then, plan our learning activities in a way that takes into account these images. As Gladys Gardner Jenkins says in the foreword of this pamphlet, "We know that a child's picture of himself may color all his relationships in the classroom and his very ability to learn that which we want to teach." Let us then, as teachers, give our attention to this aspect of teaching and learning. *Children's Views of Themselves* can be an excellent starting

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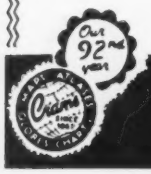

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point for this kind of thinking about children and teaching.

How Good Is Our Kindergarten? was prepared by a Special Committee on Kindergarten, in response to the questions which are being asked all over the country by school people and parents alike. "We believe," says the committee, "that our greatest service is to set guide lines for the education of five-year-olds. These guide lines describe good kindergartens, whose practices check with research pertaining to the growth, development and welfare of young children."

In its 35 pages, this pamphlet does an amazing job of treating most of the important considerations related to kindergarten: what it is, who goes to kindergarten, the need for "induction" of children into kindergarten, the components of a good program, equipment and materials, etc. Much of the content is given in the form of pertinent questions:

How much individual and group guidance do five-year-olds require?

Are children encouraged to ask questions, to seek answers, to observe, to discover, to test?

Are children helped to become familiar with things they are likely to be afraid of?

Does the kindergarten teacher have the opportunity of being a good kindergarten teacher?

Some of these questions are answered by giving examples of good procedure, or by discussions of the related research findings; others are not really answered at all, but are simply raised as guide lines for what a good kindergarten *should* be.

ACEI has long been in the forefront of the struggle for recognition of kindergarten's important place in the total educational scheme. This booklet should serve as an instrument for promoting such recognition, for convincing school boards and other community groups that kindergarten is indeed important. It should be helpful also to parents who want to know more about the *raison d'etre* of kindergarten and its role in the education of their children. And most of all, it may well serve as an evaluation instrument and a rich source of suggestions for kindergarten teachers, themselves, as they seek to do a more effective job in their own classrooms.

Equipment and Supplies is a valuable resource for elementary schools. ACEI has set up test centers in eight cities of the United States and Canada. At these centers the offerings of the various manufacturers and dealers are tested in use with children and against specific criteria. Manufacturers have been known to change some of their products, as a result of suggestions made by the personnel of these test centers. This bulletin, then, is the 1959 Revision of the ACEI list of equipment and supplies which have been thus tested and approved.

The bulletin has four general sections: (a) Suggested equipment and supplies for a nursery school, a kindergarten, a primary classroom, and an intermediate classroom; (b) Classified lists of approved equipment and supplies, including the name of the manufacturer or distributor of each item and the age level for which it is most appropriate; (c) A section of illustrated commercial advertisements; and (d) A directory of manufacturers and distributors. Surely such a bulletin should be a *must* in any elementary school that has a budget (however limited) for the purchase of instructional supplies.

—*Reviewed by* ELIZABETH Z. HOWARD, *instructor in education, University of Chicago, Illinois.*

Individualizing Your Reading Program. *Jeannette Veatch.* *New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1959. 242 p.*

Returning from an observational experience, a young beginning teacher noted that the teaching of arithmetic, music, and art had changed, but that reading was taught in the same way she had been taught. Her query, which is echoed by many experienced teachers who question ability-group methods, was "Haven't we learned anything *new* about teaching reading?"

Miss Veatch says, "We have indeed. It is a pattern which fits a reading program to the exact needs of pupils. It individualizes reading." (Preface, p. xii.)

The book describes an individualized approach to reading in which children choose their own materials from a wide variety of children's books, read at their own rate, and are taught skills as they need them. It tells of a *daily instructional* program, in which the role of the teacher is a constantly active one. She helps children individually, in small groups or the total group, as needs arise. The author, in Part I, and the other educators whose articles are included in Part II of this book, see individualized reading as helping meet individual differences.

Valuable information is provided for those who are seeking answers as to the merits of such a program, ways to begin and what materials to secure. Real concern, says Miss Veatch, is expressed by teachers as they start the program, for there are no manuals or carefully outlined techniques to follow. It is fascinating to note how creative teachers have found ways to do the job, how satisfying it was for them and for children, and how unstereotyped are the records, how rich the reading, and how satisfactory the results.

For those interested in attempting an individualized approach, there are articles to help administrators initiate such a program. There is evidence that the program is helpful for slow readers as well as for accelerated readers, and book lists aid in the selection of materials.

Nancy Larrick's research has shown that children's interests change as society changes. Current children's literature attempts to keep up with social changes, and as children choose materials from this broad literary field there is little of the limitation and restriction that often occur when only texts are used for basic reading instruction.

What happens to children in the individualized reading program is, of course, of primary concern to teachers. Some articles in the book are specifically designed to help teachers at all grade levels in the elementary school. The author and others are delighted with the renewed interest in reading, the breadth of reading, and the amazing way individualized reading leads to exploration, discovery and reading in all content fields. Results indicate that children improve in their ability to do critical thinking, become more creative, and develop a positive attitude toward research. Above all, there is agreement that children read more outside the reading class itself and become convinced that books are wonderful things.

Basic research is needed to really evaluate the results of an individualized reading program. Action research currently being advocated, however, offers enough evidence to educators to enable them to begin such a program and help children and books meet happily and with success.

—MARIE KUPRES, *director of elementary education, Hammond Public Schools, Hammond, Indiana.*

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